

# THE APOSTLES OF INDIA

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THE BAIRD LECTURE FOR 1915

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# CHAPTER I

ST. THOMAS

THE APOSTLE OF OUR LORD

(*circa* A.D. 52)

FROM the dawn of the Christian era India has been to the Church a land of high desire, and the story of the efforts made through the long centuries to win the land and its peoples for Christ is singularly engrossing. The interest, which every record of missionary endeavour possesses, is in this case greatly intensified, for here a rare combination of features is found of which more than one is unique in the annals of missions, and which taken together give the record unusual importance. Like many another mission-field, India has religions, customs, and practical problems which are peculiar to itself, and has them in an accentuated degree. But in addition to these, its missions have been marked by certain other features, which are shared by few fields, and fully paralleled in none. These are features which are due not to India itself, so much as to the Christian sources from which the missions to India have proceeded. In the sustained duration of the Christian enterprise carried on within its

borders ; in the wonderful catholicity of the sources from which the missions have come ; and, consequent on these features, in the richness and variety of the long succession of notable missionaries, Indian Missions take acknowledged precedence.

For close on nineteen centuries there have been Christian missions in India, and though at times, and occasionally for long periods, the name of Christ has scarce been more than whispered in the land, yet never through all these years has his name been altogether silenced or his influence been quite unfelt ; of no other ancient land, which is still a mission-field, can the same be said. So too is it with the amazing variety of sources from which these missions have proceeded : in the catholicity of its Christian contacts, India is without a parallel. Beginning with the Church of Jerusalem, there is hardly an important branch of the Christian Church, whether Eastern or Western, Ancient, Mediaeval or Modern, Roman or Reformed, European or American, which has not heard the call of India and in some measure has responded to it. As might naturally be expected, missionary activities of this long duration and of origins so singularly diverse, have produced a right notable succession of personalities : and while no department of Indian missionary work is without its interest and its charm, the study of the lives, methods, and achievements of these many workers for Christ has a peculiar fascination. One cannot pursue it long without realising the uncommon

greatness and the essential oneness of the missionary effort of which, throughout the centuries, India has been the field.

It is a study that induces a salutary humility regarding the missions of one's own special time and one's own particular Church. These are set in their true perspective, and lose inevitably something of the supreme position and importance which a confined outlook and limited knowledge had ascribed to them. But there is abundant compensation. They are lifted up to a place in the great Christian endeavour which has been going on in India through long centuries, and to whose furtherance all branches of Christ's Church have contributed a share. When such an uplift comes to any mission the sectional note dies and sectarian striving receives a check : which alike for the mission, and for the Church it represents, is pure gain. And still greater is the gain to the missionaries in the field, for they find themselves ranking in one of the grandest successions of which the Church of Christ has any knowledge. Missionaries of their own particular communion they remain, and their pride and joy in this family relationship continues unaffected, but an added joy, a loftier satisfaction and mightier impulse come with the thought of the long and noble succession to which, by their work for Christ in India, they have been linked.

The succession numbers its thousands, but in the long record of the centuries, the names of a few most

notable stand out like peaks in a far-stretching mountain range. Some of these owe their prominence less to what they were or what they did, than to some happy accident of history which has preserved the knowledge of their existence in periods when of other workers there is no record ; but with most, their fame is the rightful consequence of some epoch-marking or epoch-making work which they accomplished. *Apostles of India* they may in sober truth be named, for in any survey of the ages they stand out conspicuous as Makers of the Christian India, which is yet to be. To tell the tale of their apostolate, to indicate their methods where such are known, and to estimate their influence, is the object of these pages.

To Indian Christians it has long been a matter of special gratulation that at the head of the succession of Christian missionaries, who have brought to their land the religion of the Cross, is one of our Lord's own Apostles, *Thomas, surnamed Didymus*. It is a tradition which one instinctively wishes may be true. That the great Eastern land, which to-day occupies so large a place in the thought and work and prayers of the Christian Church, should also have been the scene of the labours and the object of the prayers of one of the Twelve, is, if true, a fact of intense meaning and perpetual inspiration for the whole Church. But is it true? Opinion is by no means unani-

mously affirmative, yet a careful examination of the evidence on which the claim is based will be found to justify its acceptance.

The evidence follows three distinct lines. One of these can scarcely be regarded as of much historic value, but is at least of worth as showing the eagerness with which a tradition of apostolic origin has been cherished by Indian Christians. In this respect they only vie with their brethren in the West, who have everywhere been eager to link their lands with apostolic names. The other two lines of evidence are of a more serious character. Taken in the order of importance, beginning with the least important, these lines of evidence are: *Indian Tradition*; *Ecclesiastical Tradition*; and *Apocryphal Story* coupled with *Archæological Research*.

## I.

The *Indian Tradition* gives the story of St. Thomas' Indian career as held by the Syrian Christians of Malabar on the West Coast of India, and by the Roman Catholics who are connected with the Portuguese Indian Mission. The origin of these Syrian Christians will be discussed later, but here it is sufficient to state that they represent the oldest existing branch of the Christian Church in India, and that by common admission their history goes back to the earlier centuries of the Christian era. That St. Thomas introduced Christianity into India is a fixed article of their belief. Stripped of many

accessory details, the tradition to which they adhere tells how, in the course of his missionary labours, St. Thomas having first planted Christianity in Arabia and in the Island of Socotra, sailed eastward and landed at Cranganore on the coast of Malabar, in the year 52 A.D. In Malabar he laboured successfully, established seven churches, and ordained clergy; then journeying still farther eastward arrived at Mailapur (in the neighbourhood of the modern city of Madras). There he converted the King of the country, and many of his people to the Christian Faith. China next claimed the Apostle for a little while, but ere long he returned to Mailapur. Fresh success attended his labours, and converts were added daily, but this had the effect of rousing fierce enmity on the part of the Brahmans. These stirred up a tumult, in the course of which the Apostle was stoned by the people, and was finally transfixed by the spear of a hostile Brahman.

Such is the tradition which is firmly believed by the most ancient Christian community in India, and to-day, in the locality where the martyrdom is said to have taken place, the local colour adorning the tradition is abundant. Round about Madras the Portuguese Roman Catholic Mission is strong, and under its fostering care the tradition has not been allowed to suffer any decay. Three sites connected with the Apostle's martyrdom have been "identified" and are now regular places of pilgrimage. Some eight miles to the south-west of Madras a small

hill, which forms a striking feature in the surrounding unbroken plain, bears the name of *St. Thomas' Mount*. Here the Apostle is said to have met his death, and on the spot where the fatal spear-thrust was given now stands a Christian church. Two miles nearer Madras is a still smaller eminence known as *The Little Mount*. Here a cave is shown where the hunted Apostle sought refuge, and on the rocky surface of the elevation hollows made by the feet of the Apostle are to be seen, by those who have eyes to see. Most sacred of all is the third site, identified long prior to the other two, which is none other than the tomb where the body of the slain Apostle was laid. Over the tomb now stands the noble cathedral of *St. Thomé* (the name also of the southern suburb of Madras which contains the site), and of all the cathedral's treasures the most precious is the reliquary, in which are preserved for the veneration of the people fragments of the bones of the Apostle, and the tip of the lance that pierced him.

These details are all so very circumstantial, and the tradition, as generally related, is of so uniform a character, that serious consideration is warranted : yet when this is accorded it becomes evident that, along this particular line of evidence, no clear certainty regarding the Indian apostolate of St. Thomas is likely to be reached.

Of documentary evidence in support of its cherished apostolic origin, the Syrian Church of Malabar



possesses none to-day that has any antiquity. The oral tradition which connects that Church with the Apostle unquestionably reaches far back ; and it may also be the case, as is freely asserted, that but for a regrettable catastrophe which befel the early records of the Syrian Church, documents giving support to the tradition would have been producible to-day. But if ever such existed, they are gone ; and their absence makes it necessary to seek for certainty along some other line.

The local tradition, which connects the neighbourhood of Madras with the martyrdom of St. Thomas, fares better under investigation than does the more general tradition which deals with his activity in Malabar ; for there is at least reliable documentary evidence that so far back as the close of the thirteenth century, Mailapur was accepted in India as the scene of the Apostle's death. For this testimony, India is indebted not to an Indian, but to a European, the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo. In 1288 and again in 1292, Marco Polo visited India, and his report of what he found on the Coromandel Coast—or, as he terms it, Maabar,—is of priceless value to the Thomas tradition.

“The body of Messer Saint Thomas the Apostle,” says this famous traveller, “lies in this province of Maabar, at a certain little town having no great population : ’tis a place where few traders go because there is very little merchandise to be got there, and it is a place not very accessible. Both Christians and Saracens, however, greatly frequent it in pilgrimage. For the Saracens also do hold the Saint in great reverence, and

say that he was one of their own Saracens and a great prophet, giving him the title of '*Avarian*,' which is as much to say 'Holy Man'. The Christians who go thither in pilgrimage take of the earth from the place where the Saint was killed, and give a portion thereof to anyone who is sick of a quartan or tertian fever: and by the power of God and of St. Thomas, the sick man is incontinently cured. The earth I should tell you is red" . . . "The Christians who have charge of the Church have a great number of the Indian nut trees, whereby they get their living: and they pay to one of those brother kings six groats for each tree every month." <sup>1</sup>

Subsequent to Marco Polo's time, not a few European travellers visited the shrine at intervals and their accounts of what they saw show that the tradition persisted, and even grew in fulness of detail. But these need not be quoted here. The evidence of the Venetian, as the earliest of its kind, is of the greatest value, and proves sufficiently that in the thirteenth century Mailapur was accepted by the Christians in India, as the shrine of St. Thomas, and the site of his martyrdom. Such traditions however do not spring up in a day, and it is therefore only reasonable to hold that, for a considerable time prior to Marco Polo's visit, Mailapur was a place of holy pilgrimage owing to its reputed association with St. Thomas.

But is there no earlier record of this association? By enthusiastic supporters of the tradition, two references of earlier date are much quoted and greatly relied upon. One has an interest, quite apart from

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of Ser Marco Polo* (Col. Yule's edition), vol. ii., chap. xviii.

the matter in hand, as it relates what is probably the first contact, in literature at least, between India and Britain. The reference occurs in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and tells of the fulfilment of a vow made by King Alfred, when he was besieged in London by the Danes. The record runs thus:—

“The year 883 . . . In the same year Sighelm and Aethalstan conveyed to Rome the alms which the King had vowed to send hither, and also to India to St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew, when they sat down against the army at London : and there, God be thanked, their prayer was very successful after that vow.”<sup>1</sup>

Later chronicles confirm this sending of royal alms to India, but add nothing which would help to identify the destination of the alms with Mailapur. The most that can be deduced from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is that the connection of St. Thomas with India and the existence in India of a Christian community which venerated the Apostle's name were, in the ninth century, facts known in England.

More interesting, and if it could be relied upon, much more valuable, is the other cherished reference of still earlier date. It occurs in the *In Gloria Martyrum* of Bishop Gregory of Tours, who died 594 A.D., and is as follows:—

“Thomas the Apostle, according to the history of his passion, is declared to have suffered in India. After a long time his blessed body was taken into the city which they called Edessa, in Syria, and there buried. Therefore in that Indian place, where he first rested, there is a monastery, and a Church

<sup>1</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Thorpe's edition), vol. ii., p. 66.

of wonderful size, and carefully adorned and arranged. And in this temple God exhibits a great miracle. For a lamp which is placed in it, and lighted before the place of his burial, burns by the Divine will by night and by day, receiving from no one a supply of oil or wick ; neither is it extinguished by the wind, nor upset by accident, nor is it exhausted by its burning. And it has its supply through the merit of the Apostle . . . This was told me by Theodorus, who went to the very place.”<sup>1</sup>

As to who Theodorus was, we have unfortunately no knowledge, nor is there any means of estimating the trustworthiness of his information ; and the known readiness with which Bishop Gregory was wont to listen to “travellers’ tales” makes one hesitate long before building on a foundation so insecure. But even should the statement be accepted, the absence of any name of the place which Theodorus visited, or of any indication such as would give geographical definiteness to the site makes this much-quoted record by Bishop Gregory really valueless as evidence that the Apostle Thomas was martyred at Mailapur. It is evidence that in the sixth century the early tradition of his martyrdom in India continued to be accepted by the Western Church, and that an unknown traveller “Theodorus” reported the existence of striking ecclesiastical buildings at an (unnamed) city in India where the martyrdom took place. Subsequent to the issue of Marco Polo’s account Mailapur was, naturally and inevitably, identified with the nameless shrine referred to by Bishop Gregory ; but

<sup>1</sup> *Liber in Gloria Martyrum*, chap. xxxi.

there is no real evidence to confirm this identification.

So it comes that one is thrown back on Marco Polo's reference as the earliest reliable record which links the death of the Apostle with Mailapur. It is a record which first comes to light twelve hundred years after the event of which it tells! Yet on this fragile foundation the Portuguese Mission has built up the elaborate fabric of details already quoted. The demand which this makes on one's capacity for belief, has been generally felt to be excessive, and while many are willing to suspend judgment, positive acceptance of the tradition has been widely found impossible. Roman Catholic historians of other nations and other missions than the Portuguese are among those who more than doubt. "Fairy tales, composed by native Christians," is the description given of the Thomas traditions by Müllbauer: while no Protestant historian of any weight has found himself able to attach much credence to the tales. Bishop Heber indeed thought they were "probable enough," but by most the evidence adduced in their favour is found both too meagre and too late in appearing, to be accepted as at all conclusive. However reluctantly, belief in the tradition which gives St. Thomas to Mailapur must accordingly be, though not denied, yet suspended until at least some more convincing evidence is forthcoming. Yet it remains a fact of great interest, and of much significance in determining the ecclesiastical kinship

and origin of those early Christians on the East Coast of India, that in the thirteenth century, and probably much earlier, there were Christians there, who by their traditions associated their Church with the name of St. Thomas.

## II.

*Ecclesiastical Tradition* forms the second line of evidence. What have the early historians and writers of the Church got to say about St. Thomas and his doings? Marvellously little, it must be confessed—just as little as they have to tell concerning the doings of most of the Apostles. It is one of the singular things in history that so little accurate record has been preserved of the missionary activity of our Lord's Apostles, after the time when the New Testament narrative closes. A little later the story of the progress of Christianity becomes known with increasing fulness of detail, but of the apostolic and sub-apostolic days, information is exceedingly meagre. Yet there is one point concerning the apostolic labours, on which the early writers of the Church speak with definiteness and with practical unanimity: that is the fields in which the different Apostles laboured. In all such references *India* is the country assigned to the Apostle Thomas. An apparent exception to this is that Eusebius, the "Father of Church History," says Thomas laboured in *Parthia*. But Parthia extended to the banks of the river Indus, and so included part of what is

now known as India. Eusebius wrote in the third century : later writers are more precise, indicating, if not increasing knowledge, at least a growing fixity in the tradition. Says Jerome, who wrote in the fourth century :—

“The Son of God was present to all places, with Thomas in India, with Peter in Rome, with Paul in Illyria, with Titus in Crete, with Andrew in Achaia, and with every preacher of the gospel in all the regions they traversed.”<sup>1</sup>

“With Thomas in India”—such is the unbroken and unquestioned tradition of the Church. Yet frequent and uniform as are the references to the Apostle’s Indian connection, there is a great reticence as to the incidents of his work. Beyond a statement, first made by Hippolytus,<sup>2</sup> that he suffered martyrdom at “Calamene,” a town in India (which still waits identification), and a further note by Gregory of Tours that his body was carried to Edessa, nothing is recorded by the ecclesiastical writers of the Western Church as to how it fared with the Apostle when he preached the gospel to the Hindus.

But there was an Eastern Church as well as a Western, even in those early days, long previous to the great schism, and of this old Syriac Church, Edessa (Urfah), in the upper reaches of the Euphrates Valley, was from a very early period, and

<sup>1</sup> *Epist. LIX. ad Marcellam.*

<sup>2</sup> Ante-Nicene Libr., vol. ix.

for a long stretch of time, the recognised centre. By the middle of the second century the Christian Church was planted there and a centre of vigorous growth Edessa proved to be. Its traditions carried its history still further back, for they told how one of its kings, Abgar the Black, had sent a letter of invitation to our Lord of whose fame he had heard, and had received a reply in which Jesus promised, after he should be "received up," to send one of his disciples to visit him in his stead. After the Ascension it fell to Thomas to see to the fulfilment of the Lord's promise, which he did by despatching to Edessa its first Christian teacher, Thaddaeus. Legendary though is this contact of Edessa with the first days of the Christian Church, yet it serves to throw some light on the Thomas cult which for centuries was a peculiar mark of the Churches in the East, which owed their origin to Edessa. What St. Peter came to be to Rome, St. Thomas was to Edessa, its apostolic source, its abiding patron, and its distinctive glory. If any ecclesiastical tradition of value regarding the Apostle should have persisted, it might reasonably be expected to be found here, and in recent years investigations into the life of this Syriac ecclesiastical centre have been diligently made by many inquirers. One of these, Bishop Medlycott, of the Indian Portuguese Mission, has directed his researches especially with the object of discovering all that is to be learned there regarding the Indian apostolate of Edessa's patron Saint :



and his work, *India, and the Apostle Thomas*, is of peculiar interest and value.

Where the Western Church could only tell vaguely of an Indian apostolate of St. Thomas, the Syriac Church has supplied both colour and details. The basis of these was evidently the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas*—itself the work of a Syriac writer of the third, or possibly of the second century, to which fuller reference will presently be made. But what is most significant is the manner in which the Thomas tradition is seen to have been woven into the warp and woof of the Church's life at Edessa. The statement made in the "Acts," and repeated elsewhere, that the body of the martyred Apostle had been brought to Edessa, has never been contradicted, nor is there any reason for discrediting it. Manifestly the possession of these relics would furnish Edessa with a still further motive for conserving every known tradition of the apostolic activity, and the Church was not remiss. Annually on July 3rd a great festival was held to commemorate the translation of the relics from their first resting-place to Edessa. In the hymns which were sung, then and at other times, in honour of the Apostle, his notable work in India found fullest recognition: and it is in such of these hymns as survive that the earliest confirmation, by the Syriac Church, of the Indian apostolate of St. Thomas is now to be found. These hymns are the composition of Ephraem, the famous doctor of the Syriac Church, who died at

Edessa in the year 373 A.D., and they may be accepted as expressing the beliefs of the Church of his day. From one of the hymns, which is addressed to "Thomas the Apostle," and consists of seventeen stanzas, the following verses (as translated by Bishop Medlycott) are taken :—

ON THOMAS THE APOSTLE,<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

XI.

"Blessed art thou, Thomas the Twin, in thy deeds! twin is  
thy spiritual power: not one thy power, not one thy  
name:

"But many and signal are they; renowned is thy name among  
the Apostles.

"From my lowly state thee I haste to sing.

. . . . .

XIII.

"Blessed art thou, like unto the solar ray from the great orb:  
thy grateful dawn India's painful darkness doth dispel.

"Thou the great lamp, one among the 'Twelve, with oil from  
thy cross replenished, India's dark night floodest with light.

XIV.

"Blessed art thou, whom the Great King hath sent; that India  
to his One-Begotten thou shouldest espouse; above snow  
and linen white, thou the dark bride didst make fair.

"Blessed art thou, who the unkempt hast adorned, that having  
become beautiful and radiant, to her spouse she might  
advance.

<sup>1</sup> Medlycott, p. 26.

## XV.

“Blessed art thou, who hast faith in the bride, whom from  
heathenism, from demons’ errors and from enslavement  
to sacrifices thou didst rescue.

“Her with saving bath thou cleanseest, the sunburnt thou hast  
made fair, the Cross of Light her darkened shades effacing.

. . . . .

## XVII.

“Blessed art thou, O thrice-blessed City! that hast acquired  
this pearl, none greater doth India yield :

“Blessed art thou, worthy to possess the priceless gem! Praise  
to thee, O gracious Son, who thus thy adorers dost  
enrich!”

That in those early days the Church of Edessa was abundantly satisfied that St. Thomas had carried the Gospel to India, and had there suffered martyrdom, is sufficiently established: and that the Church had good reason for so believing will be readily conceded. In this the witness of the Western Church is confirmed and amplified by the practice of the Eastern. But neither by Eastern nor Western is any clue of real value given as to the precise field of the Apostle’s Indian labours, or the locality where he died a martyr’s death. For light on these points we must seek elsewhere.

## III.

*Apocryphal Story* coupled with *Archæological Research* constitutes the third and most productive

line of evidence. Where writers of sober history are silent as to the details of the lives of their heroes, imaginative minds frequently endeavour to fill the gap. This was notably the case in the second and third centuries of the Christian era, when the silence which Scripture observes as to the missionary labours of most of the Apostles was broken by many startling and wonderful tales of apostolic adventure. Vague traditions of the scenes of their labours, and the episodes of their careers, were amplified into detailed narratives : and if the writers had any favourite theory or peculiar teaching which they wished to enforce, they promptly put it into the mouth of an Apostle, and so secured for it an authority otherwise unattainable. Of these "Apocryphal Gospels and Acts"—the religious novels of the early Christian world, written either to gratify natural curiosity or to advance the teaching of a school—one of the oldest and most popular was *The Acts of the Holy Apostle Thomas*.<sup>1</sup> The most recent criticism seems to prove clearly that it was the production of the Eastern Church rather than the Western, and it bears upon its face the evidence of being the work of an advocate of the view then fast gaining currency, that greater virtue attached to the celibate than to the married life. The Apostle indeed is presented to us far more as an advocate of celibacy and of the ascetic life than as a preacher of the Gospel. But apart from this special aspect of the "Acts,"

<sup>1</sup> Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol. xvi.

the book is an exceedingly valuable specimen of early Christian literature, and contains a highly interesting and romantic story of which the following are the main features:—

The story opens by telling that after our Lord's Ascension, the Apostles met in Jerusalem and portioned out the countries of the world amongst themselves by lot, when India fell to Thomas. But his lot did not please Thomas. "Anywhere else, only not to India," was his protest. So coercion had to be employed. Next day in the market-place of Jerusalem there happened to be a certain merchant from India, Abbanes by name, who had been sent by King Gundaphoros "to buy him a carpenter and bring him to his court". To Abbanes our Lord, who now appears on the scene in human form, brings up Thomas, recommends him as a skilful carpenter, and sells him for three pounds of silver. But says Abbanes to Thomas, "Is this thy master?" and Thomas is constrained to answer, "Yes, He is my Lord": and so the bargain is concluded.

Along with Abbanes, Thomas now proceeds to India, having divers strange adventures on the way, in which the Apostle advances the cause of celibacy, and in due course is presented to King Gundaphoros. "What trade knowest thou?" asks the King. "The carpenter and house-builder's," answers Thomas, whereon the King consults with him about plans for a royal palace he wishes to have built, is delighted with the designs submitted by Thomas,

entrusts him with a large sum of money for the execution of the work, and goes off on a journey, Thomas having promised that in six months' time the palace shall be ready.

No sooner however is the King gone than Thomas, instead of setting to work to build the palace, makes a missionary tour through all the regions round about, and distributes freely to the poor and the afflicted the money which the King had given him. More money is asked to complete the building of the palace, and when obtained is spent in the same way. But the day of reckoning comes when Gundaphoros returns, and finding no sign of any palace summons Thomas to his presence, and puts the question straight—"Hast thou built me the palace?" "Yes," replies the unruffled Apostle, "I have built it. But now thou canst not see it: only when thou hast departed this life thou shalt see it." To the angry King this appears a mere quibbling evasion, and the Apostle is hurried off to prison under sentence of death. Then follows a dramatic *dénouement*. That same night Gad, the King's brother, dies, and angels bear away his soul to the heavenly regions. There he sees a palace of beauty so marvellous that he is enraptured, and begs to be allowed to live there. "Nay," say the angels, "thou canst not live here. This palace is the one which the Christian hath built for thy brother." Instantly Gad remembers what his brother is about to do to this same Christian, and

entreats that he be allowed to return to the earth to convey the tidings of this wonderful palace. Permission is granted. Gad's soul returns to his body just on the eve of the burial, and the startled King learns of his mansion in the skies. Straightway Thomas is brought out of prison, the King asks pardon for the outrage done, confesses belief in Christ, and is baptized. Other adventures follow, mostly tending to exalt the unmarried state, and after a time the Apostle leaves the country of Gundaphoros and visits the court of Misdeus, another Indian King. There the King's own wife and family are converted to Christianity, and the King's resentment at this is so great that Thomas dies a martyr's death.

Such is the most ancient existing account of the Acts of the Apostle Thomas.<sup>1</sup> As a contribution to history it cannot be taken seriously, and yet the story it tells is not absolutely valueless. For just as with the religious historical novels of to-day, so with these old-world works of a like nature, it is to be presumed that their writers sought as far as possible to have them "founded on fact". Especially is this probable in the case of a book written so comparatively soon after the apostolic age as was the *Acts of the Holy Apostle Thomas*. At that time reliable traditions regarding the scene of the Apostle's labours, and the names of the leading men with whom he came in contact, must have been current.

<sup>1</sup> See also Appendix I

These are the bare facts that live longest in the popular memory, and for any apocryphal story to gain acceptance, a first necessity would be that current traditions on such points should be incorporated in it. So the names "India," "Gundaphoros," and "Misdeus" may be taken as constituting a small nucleus of facts, around which the amazing quantity of fiction has gathered.

But what do they decide? This much at least. The mention of "India," as the place where Thomas laboured, when coupled with the persistent ecclesiastical tradition to the same effect, may be taken as conclusive evidence that such was the name of the field of St. Thomas' missionary activity. But unfortunately this does not prove quite so much as at first sight it seems to do, for the term "India" as used by writers of those distant times had a much wider sweep than it has to-day. It then embraced in its range the whole of the countries surrounding the Indian Ocean,—East Africa, South Arabia, and Beluchistan sharing the right to the name with the modern Hindustan. To say therefore that St. Thomas laboured in "India" does not of itself associate him with the India of to-day. Something more is needed so to localise the Apostle, and such a clue seems to be supplied by the Apocryphal "Acts" when they give the names of Kings of the India where Thomas worked—*Gundaphoros* and *Misdeus*. If only the realms of these monarchs could be identified and proved to have been within the limits of the



India of to-day, something like certainty as to the mission-field of the Apostle Thomas would be reached. But when inquiries were made as to these monarchs Indian History was silent. Neither Gundaphoros nor Misdeus found any place in the roll of India's Kings, and so they were long adjudged to be mere creations of the imagination of the religious novelist of the early centuries.

But in this case the negative argument from silence has proved to be mistaken, for since the middle of the nineteenth century the judgment so long and confidently given has had to be reversed, the novelist's foundation of fact has been vindicated, and the missing link supplied to the chain that binds St. Thomas to India. For this great service we are indebted to Indian Archæology, and the link which it has supplied is a coin—or rather many coins—stamped with a monarch's head and bearing a monarch's name. Many a forgotten King has been restored of late to his place in India's royal roll by similar means, but not one of them all has been more cordially welcomed than *King Gondophares*. Throughout the Punjab, and across the north-west frontier in Afghanistan, coins have been unearthed in large numbers bearing the image of a great Indo-Scythian King of this long-forgotten name. So the locality of his Kingdom is decided. Further evidence, obtained from the inscriptions on the coins, fixes the date of his reign to the middle of the first century of the Christian era, from A.D. 21 to A.D. 60

—the very period when St. Thomas must have been engaged in apostolic work. Of King Misdeus no similar trace has as yet been found, but for such discovery one can now patiently and confidently wait.<sup>1</sup>

Thus strangely has the earth given up its dead, and in doing so has vindicated the old tradition and has made it possible for us to cherish a reasonable belief that in the India ruled over by Gondophares—the Punjab of to-day,—the Apostle Thomas found the field of his missionary labours. To the land of the five rivers, so richly favoured by nature and in our own day so abundantly watered by grace, belongs the glory of having been the first region in all India to hear the Gospel of God's love in Christ Jesus. How the glad tidings were received we know not, and probably never shall know, but it cannot be other than of deepsignificance to the Christian Church that thus early in time through one of the Twelve, our Lord placed his hand upon India and claimed it for his own.

In thus naming the Punjab as the most certain Indian field of the Apostle's activity, other fields in India are not necessarily ruled out. Too little is known to warrant dogmatism, and material does not exist that would stamp as necessarily untrue the story of the South-Indian apostolate for which many con-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. two able and impartial articles by Mr. W. R. Philipps in the *Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxxii., Jan. and April, 1903.

tend. It remains open for them to hold that Misdeus was a South-Indian Monarch, and that Mailapur was in his realm. They can also point, as they do, to the fact that the Punjab has never possessed a Christian community claiming St. Thomas as their founder, while the Christians of South India have for long centuries never ceased so to do : and they may also emphasise the fact that South India had commercial dealings with the Western world long before the Apostle's day, and that therefore a visit by him to Malabar and even to Mailapur was a perfect possibility. But possibilities are not proved facts, and on the whole question the only safe verdict would seem to be this : That St. Thomas preached the Gospel of Christ in India is a certainty : that he laboured in the Punjab, in the territories of King Gondophares, is extremely probable : that South India was a later field of his labours and the scene of his martyrdom is a tradition, unverified, and now in all likelihood unverifiable, though not beyond the bounds of possibility.

#### IV.

What did St. Thomas preach ? How did he frame the message which he delivered to the Hindus ? One would give much to know these things, but we can only speculate. *The Acts of the Holy Apostle Thomas* helps but little, for manifestly the gospel of virginity, the gospel of celibacy, which it exalts could never have been so preached by Thomas. No

disciple of Jesus, who had seen his Master hallowing the marriage tie at Cana, and had witnessed his commendation of family life when he blessed the little children, could ever have preached and acted as that old story makes Thomas to have done. No, if in the "Acts" is preserved any faint echo of the Apostle's teaching it is to be sought in the gospel of "other-worldliness" which is there so picturesquely taught. Its teaching *there* is in the direct line of Jesus' own instruction; an exaggeration of it, but also a not unnatural development. "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven," was Jesus' command to the rich young man. And again, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven". And in the story of the King's palace prepared in heavenly places we see a picturesque parable enforcing the same teaching. This life, in its riches and its joys, is uniformly belittled: the life to come is uniformly extolled. "Would that the days passed swiftly over me," says Mygdonia, one of Thomas' converts, "and that all the hours were one, that I might go forth from this world and go and see the Beautiful One, with whose impress I have been sealed, that Living One, and Giver of life to those who have believed in Him!" The Gospel that fills the heart with such longing for the hereafter, that preaches poverty in this life as a path to everlasting gain in the life to come, may well have been preached by the "Apostle

of India," for it is a gospel of which the East has long been peculiarly receptive. India's holy men have ever been ascetics, men who have despised life's pleasures, and with eager steadfastness have embraced a life of holy poverty. If Thomas, on coming to India, found such views prevailing, it would only be natural for him, at first at least, to emphasise the aspect of Christian teaching most in harmony with them. So it is possible that in the old fantastic book there may be an echo of words both real and true.

But be that as it may, there is one great truth in the Christian Gospel, of which it may be safely asserted that it was proclaimed by Thomas wherever he went—*the truth of the Risen Christ*. On that Thomas could not have kept silent. "My Lord and my God" are the last words of the Apostle recorded in the Holy Writ. With this as the supreme message of his life, he went out into the world to gladden the hearts of the nations, and with this message, above all other messages, he greeted India. So much is quite sure. And to-day there is no message which India needs more than just this same—the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. It has sometimes been pointed out as strange that in the old story of the "Acts" little or no mention is made by the Apostle of idol-worship and its evils. But there is no strangeness in this, if he gave special prominence to the risen and glorified Christ. To declare the true is ever the surest way to over-

throw the false. Darkness is not, when light comes. And the Church to-day will do her duty, if only the true light is let shine uncorrupted and undimmed. Let but the Deity of our Lord be brought home to India's heart, and the lower divinity ascribed to the gods of Hinduism will vanish away. Like Dagon of old these gods will fall down before the Ark of the Lord, and taking up the cry of Thomas, the Church of India will confess at once her Founder and her faith, saying, "My Lord and my God!"

## CHAPTER II

### PANTAENUS OF ALEXANDRIA, AND HIS TIMES

(*circa* A.D. 190)

THE story of Indian Christianity in its earliest stages suffers from one great want, which will always tend to lessen its interest for the general reader. It wants *men*. That human interest, which is so readily felt in the life histories of the pioneers of Christianity in other lands, and which makes it easy for anyone to be interested in the study of the causes for which these leaders lived and died, meets in the case of India, for the first thousand years, with sadly little to gratify it. But there is at least one compensating advantage. The very absence of details as to the careers of the Christian men who influenced India in those early days, throws us back on the more severe, but very profitable, study of the Christian movements which have done so. Neither the men nor their stories are altogether wanting, only much more is known about the movements than about the men. The men are but finger-posts, directing attention to the movements. Even so they render acceptable service, for

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they bring us face to face with many things about which the majority of Christian folk to-day think very little, and yet which are well worthy of attention and appreciative consideration. They introduce us to branches of the Church of Christ, to Schools of Christian thought, and to great centres of Christian activity, once alive and dominant, but which died so long ago that many have now forgotten that they ever existed. Yet while they lived, they influenced their world and their times mightily : and so closely is age linked to age, that our own religious thoughts and ways bear traces of that remote forgotten influence still.

Of the men who did this service, and enable us to realise something of the Christian forces of the distant past which affected India, the earliest is *Pantaenus* who went as Christ's ambassador to India, towards the close of the second century. More than a hundred years had passed since St. Thomas had heralded the Gospel there, and of any later Christian herald history is silent until it records the name of Pantaenus.

## I.

"Pantaenus of Alexandria" he is usually called, and the name gives his environment. It was *Alexandria*: not the modern city of that name—which is one of the last places from which we should expect a Christian missionary to proceed,—but the Alexandria of long ago, a city in its international



importance, and religious character, wide as the poles asunder from its present-day successor. Some three hundred years before Christ, Alexander the Great had founded it, in the hope that it would develop into the great mart of the nations, the meeting-place of East and West, and that hope had been realised. At the time of Pantaenus (A.D. 190) it was the wealthiest and most splendid city in the known world; and the fact that one of its citizens should have gone to *India* as a missionary, reminds us that India, even then, had a share in the commerce of the world of which Alexandria was the centre. It also supplies the first instance of what was to be an abiding feature in Indian Christianity—the intimate connection of Indian Commerce with Indian Missions. From that day to this, commerce has been the pioneer in the intercourse between India and the West. Where commerce has gone Christianity has also gone; for the lines along which the Indian trade has flowed to the West have been the lines along which the religion of the West has streamed eastward to India.

One has difficulty in realising how very old is the Indian trade with the Western world. For centuries prior to the time of Christ it flourished, and was conducted along three well-defined routes. Either it went by the caravans of the trader through the Khyber Pass, and north to the shores of the Black Sea; or it was carried by small coasting ships that ran up into the Persian Gulf, where Syrian

traders received the precious cargoes for transport by camel and caravan along the Euphrates valley,—the very route that will again be largely used when the long-talked-of railway is constructed; or it followed the most favoured of all the routes, when vessels of a larger size, passing the Persian Gulf, hugged the South Arabian coast, entered the Red Sea and discharged their cargoes at Berenice, on the Egyptian coast (near the modern Suakim); whence by caravan and Nile boat the precious freights were transported to Alexandria. It was a long and toilsome voyage, whose dangers and costliness were only compensated for by the great value of the trade. But in the middle of the first century, Hippalus, an Egyptian sailor, made a discovery which revolutionised the Indian trade. He discovered the regularity of the monsoons,—that for half the year the winds blew steadily over the Indian Ocean from the West and the other half as steadily from the East. So, on one notable voyage Hippalus discarded the slow coasting route with its tedium and dangers, and boldly trusting himself to the South-West monsoon steered due east to India. His boldness was rewarded. In forty days, a wonderfully short space of time (as it was then considered), India was reached. Like success attended his return voyage, when the North-East monsoon proved equally helpful, and at once the value of the new route to India was apparent. Trade rapidly multiplied. Every year a great fleet made the

voyage from Egypt to India, and back: and of all this trade Alexandria was the Egyptian centre. India and its ways became increasingly familiar, and to the many nationalities represented in the great city there were added, in ever growing numbers, the swarthy sons of Western Hindustan.

## II.

But Alexandria, in those days, was much more than a great commercial capital. It was also the leading intellectual centre of the age. No university was more famous, no library was more renowned, no philosophical schools were more celebrated, than those of Alexandria. Teachers of various cults and divers religions abounded. There Philo, the great Jewish scholar, had lived and taught, trying to weave into a unity the culture of the Greeks and the religion of the Jews. There too the Septuagint version of the Old Testament—the Greek version in common use in the time of our Lord—had been produced. The city was a very hive of industry, the abode of culture as well as of commerce, the home of the student and the philosopher no less than of the merchant prince and trader.

To this great meeting place of the nations Christianity had early found its way, and the Church planted by St. Mark rapidly grew in size and importance, its peculiar environment exercising a strong effect on its character and course, and

differentiating it from most other Churches of the time. It grew up face to face with the old pagan philosophies in their most advanced and highly developed forms. Some of its foremost converts were drawn from the ranks of these very philosophers. Controversy was ever present: and in carrying on the controversy the Church had to formulate its theology with an accuracy and a careful thoughtfulness, which were not required in the case of Churches planted in less important centres. In most places the ordinary catechetical class gave to immature Christians all the instruction in the rudiments of their faith which was needed. But in Alexandria more than this was demanded. There theology had to be a study. There defenders of the faith had to be made able for the defence. So there the catechetical class developed into a great Theological School or College. Of this college the first principal was *Pantaenus*, a man whose labours, coupled with those of his yet more famous pupils and successors, Clement and Origen, have given to the Alexandrian Theology an abiding reputation.

Regarded from the standpoint of Christian Missions the chief characteristic of this theology was its breadth—a mark whose origin is not hard to discover. These early teachers lived in constant touch with men of varied creeds, and held social intercourse and high debate with philosophers of every school. They had to survey their own and other religions

from many points of view, and the theology they left behind them reveals how they were affected by this necessity. It possesses a breadth of outlook which is quite foreign to most teachers of their day, and which brings it into close relationship with lines of thought usually deemed strictly modern. To them good was good, and of God, wherever found. If in studying other creeds or non-Christian philosophies they found pearls of truth and righteousness, they sought to trace the relationship to Christianity, and to build a bridge over which converts might pass. "To the Jews," said Clement, "belonged the Law, and to the Greeks Philosophy, until the Advent. Philosophy especially was given to the Greeks as a command peculiar to themselves; the philosophy of Socrates and Plato and Aristotle was, as it were, a stepping stone to the true philosophy which is according to Christ."

With these views there went a charity of spirit towards the non-Christian world, that pointed to the Alexandrian Church and School as being peculiarly suited for dealing with heathen nations. The Church had its own defects,—in most cases the result of incautious developments of the spirit which was its greatest virtue,—but of its loyalty to Christ and to the cause of goodness which is his, there never can be serious question. Of this let the ancient hymn of Clement, addressed to the Holy Shepherd, which we still incorporate in our Books of Praise, be witness :—

“In thy blest footprints guide us  
Along the heavenward road,  
Thine age fills all the ages,  
Undying Word of God.

“That life, O Christ, is noblest  
Which praises God the best,  
A life celestial, nourished  
At wisdom’s holy breast.”

Such was the School of which Pantaenus was the head, and such the spirit of the Church which sent him forth to preach the Gospel to the Hindus.

### III.

What of the man himself? Unfortunately the information which has come down regarding him is regrettably meagre. That his was a great personality, exercising a powerful influence on his contemporaries, is proved by the character and fame of those who were proud to have been his pupils. And that he was a profound scholar and a voluminous writer is sufficiently witnessed to by those who knew both him and his work. Of his many writings not one has survived, though it is quite possible that among the literary treasures still waiting to be recovered from the sands of Egypt, there may be included some book of Pantaenus, or some fragments of his composition. Perhaps even a record of his visit to India may be discovered! At present, however, our knowledge of him is practically limited to

what may be learned from a few brief references which occur in the writings of three of the Fathers of the Church.

The earliest of these occurs in a passage in which Clement of Alexandria, his convert and pupil and his immediate successor in office, pays warm tribute to his old master. Clement relates how under many teachers and in many lands, in Greece, Italy, Syria, and Palestine, he had studied zealously, but found no abiding satisfaction until he came to Egypt. Of the "truly blessed and memorable men" who thus were his teachers he writes:—

"Of these the one was in Greece, an Ionian, the other in Magna Graecia, the first of these from Coele-Syria, the second from Egypt, and others in the East. One was born in the land of Assyria, and the other a Hebrew in Palestine.

"When I came upon the last (he was the first in power), having tracked him out concealed in Egypt, I found rest. He the true, the Sicilian bee, gathering the spoil of the flowers of the prophetic and apostolic meadow, engendered in the souls of his hearers a deathless element of knowledge."<sup>1</sup>

That this last and greatest was Pantaenus has never been questioned.

Eusebius of Cæsarea (A.D. 265-340), the great Church historian of the early centuries, furnishes the next reference, and it is of exceptional importance:—

"About the same time (i.e. A.D. 180) the School of the faithful (at Alexandria) was governed by a man most distinguished

<sup>1</sup> Clement, vol. i., p. 355 (Anti-Nicene Christian Library).

for his learning, whose name was Pantaenus: as there had been a school of sacred learning established there from ancient times, which has continued down to our own times, and which we have understood was held by men able in eloquence and the study of divine things. For the tradition is that this philosopher was then in great eminence, as he had been first disciplined in the philosophical principles of those called Stoics. But he is said to have displayed such ardour, and so zealous a disposition, respecting the divine word, that he was constituted a herald of the gospel of Christ to the nations of the East; and advanced even as far as India. For there were still many evangelists of the word, who were ardently striving to employ their inspired zeal after the apostolic example, to increase and build up the divine word. Of these Pantaenus is said to have come as far as the Indies. And the report is, that he there found his own arrival anticipated by some who there were acquainted with the Gospel of Matthew, to whom Bartholomew, one of the apostles, had preached, and had left them the Gospel of Matthew in the Hebrew characters, which was also preserved until this time. Pantaenus, after many praiseworthy deeds, was finally at the head of the Alexandrian school, commenting on the treasures of divine truth, both orally and in his writings.”<sup>1</sup>

The only remaining source of information is Jerome (A.D. 340-420), whose writings contain two highly valuable references to Pantaenus:—

“Pantaenus, a philosopher of the Stoic sect, . . . was a man of so great prudence and of so great erudition, as well in the divine scriptures as in secular literature, that he was also sent into India by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, at the request of ambassadors of that nation. There he found that Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, had preached the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the Gospel of Matthew, which, written in Hebrew characters, he brought with him on his return to Alexandria.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Euseb. Eccl. Hist.*, bk. v., chap. x.

<sup>2</sup> Jerome, *Liber de Viris Illustribus*, chap. xxxvi.



The second reference by Jerome is more brief but even more important :—

“Pantaenus, on account of the rumour of his excellent learning, was sent by Demetrius into India, that he might preach Christ among the Brahmans and philosophers of that nation.”<sup>1</sup>

From these materials it is possible to frame a brief though unsatisfying “biographical notice” of this undoubtedly great teacher. He seems to have been born and educated in Athens, where he came into note as a student and teacher of philosophy. On his conversion to Christianity his value was discerned by Demetrius, the Bishop or Presbyter-in-chief of the Alexandrian Church, and by him Pantaenus was appointed (A.D. 180) to the charge of the newly formed Alexandrian Theological College. There success and distinction gathered round him. To his fame as a philosopher he now added a great reputation as a student and expositor of the Bible. Commentaries poured from his able pen, which extended his influence and his repute; and in addition to his scholarly qualities he evidently possessed the magnetic power of a really great teacher, “engendering in the souls of his hearers a deathless element of knowledge”. That to this galaxy of virtues he added evangelical earnestness, may be inferred from the fact that he went as a missionary to India.

His going was the result of a call. A summons,

<sup>1</sup> Jerome, *Epistola LXX. ad Magnum*.

no less clear than that of the "Man of Macedonia" who summoned Paul to Europe, beckoned Pantaenus to India. About the year A.D. 190 a deputation from some Indian community came to Bishop Demetrius, with the request that a Christian teacher be sent to India to instruct their nation. Who composed this notable deputation, from what district in India they came, whether they were Christian or Hindu in their faith, are all points regarding which we know nothing: but their request impressed the Christian Church at Alexandria with its importance, and it speaks well for the spiritual life of the Church there that their leading teacher and greatest theologian, Pantaenus, proved ready to respond in person to the call. His foremost pupil Clement was placed in temporary charge of his work, and forsaking the haunts and employments dear to a scholarly nature, Pantaenus took ship at Berenice, and sailed for India. To-day, though seventeen centuries have come and gone, we honour his name, and thank God for the memory of the man who by his example thus early taught the Church of Christ, that there are no positions so high and no attainments so great, but may be ennobled the more by being dedicated to the cause of the conquering Christ.

#### IV.

Regarding the missionary labours of Pantaenus in India there is extremely little definite knowledge. Enough is recorded to what interest and provoke

discussion, but not enough to satisfy the one or end the other. Some even dispute the fact of his having gone to India at all, and hold that the "India" to which he journeyed was the Southern Coast of Arabia. But the statement quoted from Jerome—"that he was sent to preach Christ among the Brahmans and philosophers of that (the Indian) nation"—is surely conclusive. South Arabia never reared "philosophers," and certainly never bred "Brahmans". The only plea on which the India of to-day can be deprived of Pantaenus, is to say that Jerome was mistaken—as has been oftener than once asserted. "Jerome," says one of the most recent advocates of the other view, "erroneously transferred the Brahmans from India proper to El Yemen."<sup>1</sup> But this is not criticism. Jerome had no end to serve by misstating facts concerning Pantaenus, nor was he badly situated for their discovery. He stood in the full stream of Church tradition, quite likely was familiar with writings of Pantaenus himself, and was acquainted with the surface features of life in South Arabia and in India. When such a writer says that Pantaenus preached Christ in the land of the Brahmans, there can be no reasonable hesitation in ranking Pantaenus as an apostle of India.

But all controversy does not end here; for debate proceeds as to the precise district in India which the missionary scholar visited. The usual sup-

<sup>1</sup> Medlycott, p. 180.

position however is that he found his mission-field somewhere on the western side of Peninsular India ; and as in his day Barygaza (the modern Baroche at the mouth of the Nerbudda River) was the favourite port of arrival for Egyptian vessels, it is most probable that he began his labours there, proceeding later perhaps towards Cochin, between which place and Baroche there was a steady coasting trade. But his tour of investigation, — and it was little more than that, — cannot have been very extensive or prolonged, for in a few years he is found back in Alexandria, engaged in his old work. There he laboured till A.D. 211 when he perished in one of the great persecutions ; and now every year on 7th July his martyrdom is commemorated by the Church of Rome. It might well be remembered by every Church in India. In the Roman Martyrology, over against the date stated, is the following entry :—

“At Alexandria (the feast or commemoration) of St. Pantaenus, an apostolic man and endowed with every knowledge, whose zeal and love for the word of God was so great that, inflamed by the fervour of his faith and piety, he went forth to peoples secluded in the farthest recesses of the East to preach the Gospel of Christ : and returning finally to Alexandria he slept in peace under Antoninus Caracalla ” (A.D. 211-217).

## V.

Of even greater interest than Pantaenus' own labours in India is his account of what he found there. On his return to Alexandria, he reported

that he had met in India with Christians who traced their Christianity to the personal teaching of St. Bartholomew, and who said that this Apostle had left with their fathers a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew "written in Hebrew characters". This precious relic they had given to Pantaenus, by whom it was brought back to Alexandria, as an indubitable proof of the truth of his tale.

No richer "find" has ever been made in India than this, nor one that stimulates a greater desire for yet fuller information. Even after all these centuries Pantaenus' story of those isolated Indian Christians is intensely interesting. The reference to St. Bartholomew as their original teacher may very likely mean but little. As has been quite reasonably suggested<sup>1</sup> it may mean nothing more than that their fathers of four or five generations back had learned of Christ from that Apostle's lips, and so his name had been treasured from generation to generation. Too little is known to warrant anything more being said. But there remains this fact of abiding interest, that in the end of the second century there were Christians living on the Western side of India, who possessed a copy of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, written in the Hebrew characters.

Who were they? When this question can be definitely answered, the mystery of the origin of the Christian Church in India will be solved. But

<sup>1</sup> Smith's *Conversion of India*, p. 15.

that day has not yet come. The Syrian Christians of Malabar have indeed no hesitation in furnishing an answer. The Christians whom Pantaenus encountered were, they assert, their own early ancestors in the faith. And if they are prepared to surrender their cherished traditional connection with St. Thomas, this is quite a possibility. But not otherwise: for by any descendants of the converts of St. Thomas, the name of that Apostle would most surely have been mentioned to Pantaenus, along with the name of St. Bartholomew. Apostolic connection in those days was counted far too precious to be let slip through silence. The same criticism applies to the theory which places the mysterious Christian community in the Punjab, the descendants presumably of St. Thomas' converts there. The absence of any recorded claim by them to a connection with this Apostle is again hostile to the theory; which is further negatived by the unlikelihood of Pantaenus journeying to the remoter Punjab, when the nearer coast of Peninsular India was so easily accessible.

Most probable is the suggestion offered by Neander, and accepted by not a few since his day, that those Christians of debate were the descendants of settlers in Western India of Jewish extraction, together with such converts as had been won from the surrounding peoples. The whole question of their identity is one of probabilities, and does not admit of dogmatic statement, yet the balance leans in favour of this position. •It is true that the great

emigration of Jews to the Western coast of India did not take place until the sixth century, but there is nothing at all improbable in holding that there were Jewish settlers there at a much earlier date. Probabilities indeed are all in this direction. Not only does the ubiquity of the Jewish race favour the idea, but the known fact, that in the first century great numbers of Jews resided in Alexandria and in Babylonia, adds to its likelihood. In Alexandria and its neighbourhood the Jews numbered over one million, and in Babylonia there were thousands of the race who traced their descent from the Jews of the Captivity. Thus placed on the two great lines of Indian traffic, India must have been to them a familiar name, and its trade, in all probability, a valuable consideration. What is then more likely than that to the land whence the trade was derived, and along the familiar lines of travel, Jewish emigrants would find their way? The traditions of the modern Jews of Cochin tell how when the second Temple was destroyed in the year A.D. 70 their forefathers first began to emigrate to Malabar, and of some immigrants the tale may well be true. And if Jews were in India, almost certainly there were Christian Jews as well, for the Hebrew Christian shared in the wandering habits and the trading instincts of his brother of the older faith. No other supposition as to the origin and racial affinity of those Christians whom Pantaenus found in India, has quite so much in its favour as this,

and the presumption grows yet stronger when we remember what Pantaenus tells of the copy of the Gospel which he found there, and which was the groundwork of their faith. It was the Gospel according to *St. Matthew*—the evangelist, *par excellence*, of the Jews. And this book, though in all likelihood in the Aramaic language,<sup>1</sup> was written in those Hebrew characters beloved by the Jews. So we are led to the conclusion that those first Indian Christians, of whose existence history, properly so called, has any cognizance, were probably the descendants and spiritual children of nameless Jewish Christian traders of the first and second centuries. Nameless they are indeed, so far as human records go, but their names shine bright in the records of the saints of God. True sons of the early Church they were, fit representatives of the time when every scattering of the Christians meant an extension of the realms of the Christ. Commerce did not dull their devotion, nor did contact with heathenism blight their faith; but journeying to India they carried their light with them and let it shine. Oblivion has swallowed up their names but their work has endured. The lamp they lit on Indian soil has gone on burning,—with varying brightness it is true—but never has it been altogether extinguished; and even in the darkest hours of India's life it has spoken to faithful hearts of the coming day.

<sup>1</sup> See Medlycott, p. 174 (note).



## CHAPTER III

### APOSTOLIC FOOTPRINTS

(A.D. 300—A.D. 1500)

THE period covered by this chapter extends over a thousand years. Yet our knowledge of the fortunes of the Christian Church in India, throughout this long stretch of time, is so very scanty, that it is easily possible to tell practically the whole tale in this brief compass. From the year A.D. 200—the time when Pantaenus returned from India to his college duties at Alexandria,—a veil descends on Indian Christianity and shrouds it completely from the view of the Western world. Through the succeeding centuries at rare intervals the veil is lifted just for a moment, letting a gleam of sunshine light up now one point of the darkness, now another; but the moments are both very rare and very fleeting, only sufficing to let us see that Christianity still lives, that behind the veil the lamp is not extinguished. “Apostolic Footprints” these rare revealings may fitly be termed. We do not see Apostles, but we discern marks which show that some messengers of Christ have passed this way.

## I.

The first lifting of the veil is of the very slightest nature. In the year A.D. 325 there was held the great Council of Nicæa—an ecclesiastical assembly which is better known than most gatherings of the kind, from the fact that it framed the Nicene Creed. Three hundred and eighteen Bishops sat in this famous council, and the name of one of those, who along with the others signed the epoch-making decrees, was "*John, (Bishop) of Persia and Great India*". Of Bishop John and his diocese nothing more is known than these words tell, but presumably Persia was his headquarters, and some part of India had for him at least a nominal interest. Exactly which part, no one can tell; but the probabilities rather favour the India west of the Punjab, as being most contiguous to the Persian portion of this vast and shadowy diocese.

About the middle of the same century the veil is again raised and to slightly better purpose. In the year A.D. 354 or thereby, according to an old chronicler, Philostorgius (born A.D. 364), a visit was paid to the Indian Christian community by "*Theophilus, the Indian*". Philostorgius was an Arian, and his *History of the Church*, written in twelve books, has only survived in the form of an abridgment by Photius, who was of the orthodox party, and did not approve of the mission of Theophilus—an Arian

like his historian. But this does not affect the validity of the reference. The inspirer of the mission was the Emperor Constantius, whose strong Arian sympathies made him seek to foster Arianism both within the Empire and beyond it. It was with this purpose that Theophilus was despatched—in the first instance to the Sabaeans or Homeritae of South Arabia.

“Constantius sent an embassy to the people formerly known as the Sabaeans, but now the Homeritae . . . that they might be brought over to the true faith. He was anxious, by means of fine presents and winning words, to establish friendly relations with the princes of Saba, and to obtain permission for Roman subjects carrying on trade in these regions to build churches for themselves: and the same rights for the nations who had been converted to Christianity.”<sup>1</sup>

At the head of this embassy was placed Bishop Theophilus, the Indian, of whose origin it is stated :

“Theophilus, while very young, was sent to Rome as a hostage from the Divaei, during the reign of Constantine.”

The Divaei, or inhabitants of Divus, are by most investigators now identified as the dwellers in the Maldivé Islands in the Indian Ocean,<sup>2</sup> and after concluding successfully his work among the Homeritae, Theophilus bethought him of his native islands and paid them a visit.

<sup>1</sup> Philostorgius, *Fragmenta*, iii., 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Medlycott, p. 190.

“And thence he proceeded to other parts of India, and reformed many things which were not rightly done among them ; for they heard the reading of the Gospel in a sitting posture and did other things which were repugnant to the divine law. But with respect to doctrine he found nothing that needed correction, and had only to confirm what had been believed there from the earliest times—(namely, that the Son was of a different substance from the Father).”

The whole reference is sufficiently indefinite, and the discovery of a pre-Arian Arianism in a very remote and isolated Christian community—presumably on the Malabar coast, the land nearest to Divus—evokes a smile of incredulity: but it implies at least that there were Christians then in India and also churches, though apparently in their ecclesiastical ways they varied somewhat from common usage. It is interesting to note that the practice of sitting while the Gospel was being read, which is specially singled out for reproof, was also made a matter of reproach against the Alexandrian Church. Says Sozomen, “Among the Alexandrians prevailed this new and unbecoming custom, that while the Gospels were being read the bishop did not rise, which I have neither seen nor heard done elsewhere.”<sup>1</sup> In India it was evidently also done. Is there in this common irregularity a trace of a relationship between the Church that sent Pantaenus forth and the inchoate Church in the land to which he went?

<sup>1</sup> Sozomen, *Hist. Eccles.*, vii., 19.

## II.

A fuller reference to this shadowy community of Christians on the Western coast of India, in the same fourth century, is supplied by an interesting tradition, which is firmly held to-day by those who claim to be their lineal descendants. In oral form, the tradition was found prevailing at the time when the Syrian Church of Malabar first came under the cognizance of European voyagers, but the earliest written record of the tradition which now exists is in a Malayalam history of the Church, of native authorship and entitled *A Brief History of the Syrians in Malabar*. This gathers up the floating traditions of the community, but itself dates only from the middle of the eighteenth century. After having given the traditional story of the landing of St. Thomas (Mar Thomas) at Cranganore, and telling of a subsequent decadence on the part of the Christians, it proceeds :—

“Now two hundred and ninety-three years from the arrival of Mar Thomas the Apostle, at which time these people were becoming more and more afflicted, by the blessing of God who saw the decay of the Christians, the Bishop of Uraha (Edessa) in the land of Syria, had this dream-oracle in his sleep, as follows :—

“‘Is it no sorrow to you that the Christians of Malabar, whom I died to gain, are wasting and perishing?’ Having heard this voice, the Bishop of Uraha went to the holy Katholikos (Patriarch) of Jerusalem, and reported the matter. Then the Katholikos called together all the experienced divines, and having taken counsel with them and come to a decision, he summoned an honourable Christian merchant

named Thomma, living in Jerusalem, and commanded him to ascertain and report the state of affairs in Malabar. He arrived in Malabar, and when he saw the cross worn as the badge of the Christians that believed through the labours of St. Thomas, he approached them.

“He then enquired and learnt all their affairs in past years, and having seen their distress for want of clergy, he decided to make no stay there, but forthwith embarked in his ship, returned to Jerusalem and told the holy Katholikos all their circumstances. Thereupon the Katholikos commanded and sent with the honoured merchant, Joseph the Bishop of Uraha, and besides him several priests and deacons, and many men, women, and children. Having blessed them, he embarked them, and by the mercy of God, they all landed safe at Malabar, in the year of our Lord 345.”<sup>1</sup>

The substantial accuracy of this tradition has never been seriously doubted, though, on what seem insufficient grounds, the immigration which it records has been placed by some four hundred years later in time. But the earlier date more than holds its own and needs not to be discarded. A collateral fact adds to its probability. In the Persian Empire at the very time when the exodus is said to have taken place, the Christian Church was entering on a long period of persecution, and the stress at home, added to the news of the needs of distant Malabar, would only make such emigration more likely. On the Malabar Christians the arrival of this large and influential company of co-religionists had marked effects. The native ruler

<sup>1</sup> Transl. from the Malayalam original by W. J. Richards, D.D., in his *Indian Christians of St. Thomas*.

of the district received them courteously and conferred on the Christian community a social status in the land, such as no other Christian body in India has ever received. And still more important in its consequences was the ecclesiastical connection which was now established between Indian Christianity and the Syrian Church of Edessa. Whatever the origin of this remote Indian Church may have been, whether its nameless founders came from Alexandria or from the Euphrates valley, what finally decided its ecclesiastical relationship was the landing in Malabar in A.D. 345 of these four hundred emigrants, under Thomma, the merchant of Jerusalem.

### III.

That the relationship thus formed proved of an enduring character was shown in the middle of the sixth century, the date of the next dispelling of the haze. For our knowledge of Indian Christian origins this unveiling is of first importance and correspondingly great is the debt owing to the man who did this service, "*Cosmas the Indian Voyager*". He was one of the most singular characters of his day. For the greater part of his life he was a rich and prosperous merchant of Alexandria, who traded in his own vessels with all the lands surrounding the Indian Ocean. But he was a man who sought more than wealth in his travels. He sought knowledge too, and wherever he went he made careful

inquiries into the manners and customs and life of the various races he encountered. He was a geographer, a naturalist, and an explorer, as well as a merchant. By and by, growing weary of this active and trying life, he retired from business and entered a monastery, where he occupied his time in filling twelve large volumes with an account of the many lands he had visited, and the peoples he had seen. It is to this work of the retired Alexandrian merchant—*Christian Topography* he terms it—that we are indebted for by far the clearest glimpse of Christianity in India at that period. And this is his testimony regarding things seen in India on a voyage dating about A.D. 522 :—

“We have found the Church not destroyed but very widely diffused, and the whole world filled with the doctrine of Christ, which is being day by day propagated, and the Gospel preached over the whole earth. This, as I have seen with my own eyes in many places, and have heard narrated by others, I, as a witness of the truth, relate. In the island of Taprobane (Ceylon) in Further India, where the Indian Sea is, there is a church of Christians where clergy and faithful are to be found ; whether also further beyond, I am not aware. And such is also the case in the land called Male (Malabar) where the pepper grows. And in the place called Kalliana (either Quilon or Kalyan) there is a Bishop usually ordained in Persia, as well as in the isle called the Isle of Dioscoris (Socotra) in the same Indian Sea. . . . You find priests ordained in Persia sent there ; there are also a number of Christians.”<sup>1</sup>

This record is invaluable, inasmuch as it gives the first clear evidence of the existence in South India

<sup>1</sup> See Translation for Hakluyt Society, by J. W. McCrindle



of an organised Christian Church. That there were Christians there centuries before this we have already seen, but Cosmas makes it clear that by the middle of the sixth century, when he wrote, these Christians had been formed into a Church with its regular clergy, and presumably all the ordinary apparatus of Church life.

But the report of Cosmas tells more than that; it places beyond all doubt the deeply interesting fact that the mother-Church, to which the Indian Christians then looked for aid and government, was the Church of Persia. The signature at Nicæa of "John Bishop of Persia and Great India" had already suggested the existence of such a connection. The tradition of the coming of Thomas Cananus with his fellow-immigrants had increased its likelihood. And now the report of Cosmas confirms it. In those centuries about which we are so ignorant India's ecclesiastical relationships had shifted. Alexandria, which had sent forth Pantaenus, had apparently not continued her Indian work, and the mantle thus laid down had fallen upon Persia, from whose Church had gone forth the succession of nameless apostles needed to keep alive the light so dimly burning in Malabar. Nestorian that Persian Church had become, so in virtue of adoption the Indian Church also became heretical in the eyes of the orthodox West: yet it was well for the Indian Christians that the transference of guardianship took place at the time it did, for had they continued

to depend on Alexandria for nourishment, with the uprising of Mohammedanism in the seventh century that nourishment had surely ceased, and not unlikely apostles of the Cresent would have followed destructively in the wake of the messengers of the Cross. But the transference to the care of Persia's Nestorian Church secured a guardianship which, as the event proved, continued long without any serious break.

#### IV.

There is little talk or thought to-day regarding the great Church to which we are thus introduced. With it, more than with most old Churches, "now is now and then was then". Now the Nestorians are a feeble folk, living in the Western borders of Persia and the recesses of Kurdistan, the objects themselves of missions from the Presbyterian and Anglican Churches of the West. But though the mighty are thus greatly fallen India can never forget what, in the days of their might, the Nestorians did for her. What Columba and his monks did for Scotland and Northumbria, what Augustine and his followers did for Southern Britain, that the apostles of the Nestorian Church, in the days of its power, sought to do for India.

In the eyes of the orthodox West it was a heretical Church, but with one of its two leading heresies the Reformed Churches of to-day have not much fault to find. It declared against the custom which

began to spread in the fourth century, by which men spoke of the Virgin Mary as the "Mother of God". Not so, said Nestorius, Mary was the mother of the *human* nature of our Lord, but not of the *divine*. Call her "Mother of Christ" if you will, but not "Mother of God".

The other heresy was more serious. According to it the divine and the human elements in our Lord were so distinct as to form not merely two natures but also two Persons, the divine Word dwelling in the human Jesus.

On this double count a great schism of early Christendom took place, in the year A.D. 498, when the Churches round the Euphrates valley separated themselves from Western Christendom, and formed a distinct organisation, which was ruled over by the Patriarch of Babylon. With splendid rapidity the newly formed Church advanced to the position of the dominant Church of Asia,—a position which it honourably maintained for nigh one thousand years. That it erred in its teaching regarding the Person of Christ is unquestionable, but by its devotion to the cause of Christ it made a noble atonement. With the exception of the Moravian Church of modern times, no Church has been more conspicuous than the Nestorian for faithful and continuous obedience to Christ's missionary command. At a time when the Western Church was finding its highest ideal in a life of seclusion, either in the desert or in the cell of a monastery, Nestorian missionaries, more

faithful to the spirit of their Master, penetrated into the remotest parts of Asia, braving hardships, perils and death in the endeavour to evangelise the nations. In the oft-quoted and impressive words of Neale, these Nestorians "pitched their tents in the camps of the wandering Tartar: the Lama of Tibet trembled at their words: they stood in the rice-fields of the Punjab, and taught the fishermen of the sea of Aral; they struggled through the vast deserts of Mongolia: the memorable inscription of Singanfu attests their victories in China: in India the Zamorin himself respected their spiritual and courted their temporal authority".<sup>1</sup> Such was the great brotherhood, some of whose members Cosmas met in Western India, and whose successors, through many generations, continued to lead the struggling Indian Christians, gathering them into an organised Church, and establishing that Church on a basis so firm that it still exists, when the mother organisation to which it owed so much has dwindled to an insignificant fragment.

## V.

Exactly how far into India these Nestorians penetrated, will never be fully known, but the next lifting of the veil shows that by the seventh or eighth century they had gone as far as Mailapur, now a suburb of the modern Madras; and very

<sup>1</sup> Neale's *History of the Holy Eastern Church* (Intro.).

interesting is the medium through which this revealing comes.

In the year 1547, by which time the Portuguese had become a power in India, some of their people came to the neighbourhood of what is now Madras, where European travellers, some centuries before, had reported that Christianity had established itself: but now the place was found to be wholly given to idolatry. No Christian agency of any kind existed, and these Portuguese resolved to begin anew the good work by building a church upon a neighbouring hill, later known as St. Thomas' Mount, where some ruins told that a church had once existed. In making excavations for their purpose, there was unearthed a granite slab, two feet long by one and a half broad, with strange carving and lettering. When cleaned, it proved to be of undoubted Christian origin, for the carving presented in bold relief a Greek cross; each arm of the cross terminated in an ornamental trefoil, and over the cross there hovered a dove, the Christian symbol of the Holy Spirit. Round the carving ran an inscription in what to the discoverers was an unknown tongue. Naturally they were intensely anxious to have it interpreted, and a quick-witted Brahman supplied them with an interpretation of a kind sure to be most welcome. The letters, he said, were hieroglyphs, and from these hieroglyphs he read to the grateful Portuguese a long account of the coming of St. Thomas, the Holy Apostle, to Mailapur, and

of his martyrdom on the very mount where the stone was found. Never was relic more welcome. Straightway the stone was credited with miraculous powers, and not long after there was instituted, by the authorities of the Roman Church in India, a yearly festival, to be observed by the faithful on the 18th December, "being the day whereon the Holy Cross of the Apostle St. Thomas did sweat".<sup>1</sup>

But, alas! for the credulity of the discoverers of this truly precious relic,—the oldest and most valuable which Indian Christianity possesses. The slab exists still, built into the wall behind the altar in the church on the summit of St. Thomas' Mount, and its inscription is there for all to see. Modern antiquarian scholarship has busied itself over the writing, and has exposed the fraud of the Brahman "interpreter". The language of the inscription proves to be Pahlavi, the old Persian tongue, and the translation now most favoured, and arrived at after a minute comparison with the characters on two similar stones which are carefully preserved at Cottayam in Travancore, runs literally in this way: "He whom the suffering of the self-same Messiah, the forgiving and upraising (has) saved, (is) offering the plea whose origin (was) the agony of this". But this is not English. A free rendering would be:—

<sup>1</sup> Acts and Decrees of Synod of Diamper (1599), Session VIII., Decree IX. (Hough's *Christianity in India*, p. 648).

“One who has been forgiven, renewed, and saved, by the suffering of the Messiah, now pleads daily the agony of the Cross.”<sup>1</sup>

No records exist to tell when these three most precious tablets were erected or who were the pious donors, but the inscriptions speak for themselves. The form of the letters fixes their date to the seventh or eighth century, and the language of the writing tells the ecclesiastical connection of the sculptors. They were sons of the Persian Church. So from these silent yet eloquent memorials of the past we learn that in those far-off days, Nestorian missionaries had carried the Gospel to the coast of Coromandel, as their predecessors had already done to the shores of Malabar. But this Eastern mission was not so fortunate in its fate as was the Western. Mailapur was remote from the centre of their Church's life, and the civil rulers in these parts did not give to Christians or to Christianity the same friendly recognition, as was so freely accorded to the Christians of Malabar. So the Mailapur Nestorian Mission led but a languishing life through the centuries that succeeded the date of the carving of the cross. Travellers who followed in the wake of Marco Polo (from whom we gather that about 1288 there was a fairly large community of Christians

<sup>1</sup> See Art. by Dr. E. W. West, in *Epigraph. Indica* (vol. iv.), part iv., 1896, p. 174, on “Inscriptions around Crosses in South India”.

there), tell of a gradual decline ;<sup>1</sup> until at last, about the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Mailapur Mission came to an end, and the only trace of Christianity which one who visited the locality then could find was a church, "half in ruins, and in charge of a Mohammedan Fakir, who kept a lamp burning".<sup>2</sup>

Very different was the issue of the Nestorian Mission to Western India. There commercial enterprise kept the district in constant touch with Persia, making intercourse between the daughter and mother Churches easy, natural, and frequent. And there the native rulers of the country smiled graciously on their Christian subjects, and granted them such political status as gave the Church a power and a position by which it profited. Throughout the centuries there came too, at intervals, immigrants from Persia, as was notably the case in the eighth and ninth centuries, from which time fairly reliable traditions exist as to the progress of the Church. Thenceforward it may be held to be worthy of the distinctive name which it bears in history, *The Syrian Church of Malabar*. It has to be remembered, however, that the name is one which points to the source of the Church's faith and practice, and not, save in a minor degree, to any racial connection of the people themselves. It is, and long has been, a truly Indian

<sup>1</sup> See Col. Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. ii., p. 203 (note).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 294 (note).



Church. With the passage of time the community has steadily increased, until to-day, as shown by the Census of 1911, the Syrian Christians number over 728,000, or one-fifth of the whole Native Christian population of India.

## VI.

Still journeying down the centuries we approach the time when the veil is to be finally lifted from the face of India, and when in consequence of the unveiling, the Churches of Europe are to awake to the missionary duty, which they had left so long to be done single-handed by a too little esteemed Church of Asia. The explanation of Europe's tardiness is not difficult. It was her misfortune rather than her fault, for the way to India had long been completely blocked. From the seventh century, when Jerusalem was taken by the Saracens, the Crescent had floated proudly over Egypt, Syria, and Persia, and an insuperable obstacle had prevented any intercourse between India and Christian Europe. Trade indeed might filter through the barrier and did: but not religion. No Christian missionaries might pass that way, which then was the only way. And so while Europe learned to appreciate the Indian commodities, which Mohammedan traders handed over the barrier to Christian merchants who were waiting there to receive them, concerning India's people, their life and their religion, there was

no first-hand knowledge. Nor did that ignorance, with the consequent apathy, begin to disappear until the end of the thirteenth century. Then it was that Marco Polo's famous journey began a new era. From China that great Venetian was sent by the Emperor as an ambassador to Persia, and on his way he visited India's shores; and the story of his travels, when published in Europe, aroused intense curiosity as to India, begetting an interest in her peoples which ever since has gone on growing. Despite the opposition of Mohammedan powers, other travellers penetrated to the forbidden land: and as just at this time the Mongols had driven Islam out of Persia, that approach to India became available. Europe's knowledge of India slowly increased. Tidings came of Christian communities which were found existing on the Southern and Western coasts, and the hearts of good men were stirred. Concern for the errors in the faith of those far away Christians proved quite as powerful a missionary lever as the desire to save the souls of the heathen, and missionaries from the Western Church gradually found their way through Persia to the far East.

Of these, the best known is *Jordanus*, a Dominican friar who along with four friars of the Franciscan Order left Avignon in 1319 for the East, and in 1321 proceeded through Tabriz in Persia to Ormuz, whence they sailed as missionaries to India. Mailapur and far Cathay were their ultimate goals,

but they never got beyond the western shores of India. Fortunately Jordanus left behind him a few literary remains,—two letters, and the *Mirabilia Descripta*, a brief description of the “Wonders of the East,”<sup>1</sup>—and these have preserved the knowledge of the two facts which make his passing apostolate of lasting interest. They tell of the death of the first Christian martyrs in India since the martyrdom of St. Thomas himself, and they record the earliest contact of the missionaries of the Western Church with the Nestorian Christians of the Indian Syrian Church.

A storm drove the voyagers to seek refuge on the Island of Salsette (now the site of Bombay), and leaving his companions at Thana, a town in the north of the island, Jordanus made a journey northward to see Baroch which was one of three points where he planned commencing work. But ere he had got farther than Surat he was recalled by alarming tidings. His comrades had been arrested: and before he could return to Thana the further news met him that they had suffered death. Thana was then under Mohammedan control, and according to the account which Jordanus has left of the tragedy, a zealous follower of the prophet, Yusuf of Alexandria, suspecting the friars' errand, had caused them to be summoned before the governor and questioned as to their purpose. The examination evoked from the friars an unswerving avowal of their faith in Christ, and

<sup>1</sup> Translated for the Hakluyt Society by Col Sir Henry Yule.

this by skilful questioning was made to develop into a condemnation of Mohammed. "We speak not of Mohammed, but of Christ," had been their answer when asked their mind as to the prophet of Islam; "from what we believe of the one, you may infer what we believe of the other." But a more pointed question drew such an answer as was desired: "Mohammed," said one of the four, "was the son of perdition and is now in hell with his father, the devil". Death by fire, in the market-place, was the sentence consequent on this uncompromising deliverance on the prophet's character and destiny: but, relates the friar, the flames were powerless to hurt the brave confessors, and the awed governor set them free to go whither they would.

"But the Kazi and Yusuf, full of malice knowing that they had been entertained in the house of a certain Christian, said to the governor: 'What doest thou? Why slayest thou not these Christ-worshippers?' He replied that he found no cause of death in them. But they say: 'If ye let them go, all will believe in Christ, and the law of Mahomet will be utterly destroyed'. The governor again says: 'What will ye that I should do, seeing that I find no cause of death?' But they said: 'Their blood be upon us. For it is said that if one cannot go pilgrim to Mecca, let him slay a Christian, and he shall obtain a full remission of sins, as if he had visited Mecca.' Wherefore the night following the governor, the Kazi, and Yusuf, sent officers who despatched the three brethren, Thomas, James, and Deme-trius, to the joys of heaven, bearing the palm of martyrdom. And after a while, having made brother Peter, who was in another place, present himself before them, when he firmly held to the faith of Christ, for two days they vexed him with sore afflictions, and on the third day, cutting off his head, accomplished his martyrdom."

With a sorrowful heart, but not dismayed, Friar Jordanus on his return saw to the burial of his dead comrades in the church at Sefer, and then gave himself with unfaltering zeal to the work he had now to accomplish alone. His account of his labours is best given in its original form, the unaffected simplicity of which reveals the earnest sincerity of the man. Writing in January, 1324, he says :—

“Be it known to you, my venerable father, that I am alone and without an associate in India, a poor pilgrim, where I have been permitted to live after the passion of my associates. And in the same place, after their blessed martyrdom which took place in the fifth week before Palm Sunday, in the course of ten days, in a district which is called *Parrot*, I baptized about ninety persons, and still I do not cease to baptize: for since then I have baptized more than twenty in Tanna, and thirty-five at Sefa. Praise be to Christ, the creator of all! . . . In the fore-said city (Tanna) and circumjacent district I remain alone for two years and a half, going in and out, not having been held worthy to share the crown of my blessed associates. Who can tell all the adversity that I have suffered since then? I have been captured by pirates, imprisoned by the Saracens, accused, maligned, reproached, and exposed for a long time, like some buffoon, only in my shirt, and to this day I am deprived of the habit of my sacred order. Oh, what hunger, thirst, cold, heat, rage, maledictions, bodily infirmities, poverty, persecution, revilings on the part of false Christians, severity of climate, and innumerable other evils I have suffered! But what matters it? Greater still I am ready, even to death, to suffer more meekly, for the sake of the meek Jesus. Also on account of my extreme poverty, I continually suffer various bodily ailments. But this discord on my account among the people is most of all hateful. Yet I have happily baptized more than one hundred and thirty of both sexes. Therefore let holy brethren come: let them come established in patience, that so the fruit of the

baptized may be preserved from evil, and in due time, separated from the chaff, may be happily stored in the garner of the Lord."

Returning to Europe after these trying experiences, Jordanus took with him more detailed and accurate information as to India and the Christians there than Rome had yet received, and the effect was a quickened interest in high quarters concerning these Eastern schismatics. To reclaim them from their errors became a prime motive of Indian missions, and when in 1330 Jordanus was himself despatched to the East once more, as Bishop of Columba (Quilon), he carried with him a papal letter of commendation to the Syrian Christians, and an invitation to them to be reconciled to the Catholic Church. Of the Bishop's doings in Quilon we have no knowledge, but passages in the *Mirabilia* preserve for us his general opinion of the Nestorian Christians of Western India, while at the same time they reveal the essentially proselytising spirit of much of his missionary labours. Yet again the true Christian devotion of the man himself is very apparent.

"In this India (in the Western coast from Karachi to Northern Malabar) there is a scattered people, one here, another there, who call themselves Christians, but are not so, nor have they baptism, nor do they know anything else about the faith: nay, they believe St. Thomas the Great to be Christ! There I baptised and brought into the faith about three hundred souls, of whom many were idolaters and Saracens. And

let me tell you that among the idolaters a man may with safety expound the Word of the Lord, nor is any one among the idolaters hindered from being baptised throughout all the East."

His general outlook, drawn presumably from his experience in Quilon, as well as from his earlier residence in Thana, is one of much hopefulness, if the Church in the West can only be got to do her part.

"Of the conversion of those nations of India I say this, that if there were two or three hundred good friars, who would preach faithfully and fervently the Catholic faith, there is not a year which would not see more than ten thousand persons converted to the Christian faith. For whilst I was among those schismatics (i.e. Syrian Christians) and unbelievers, I believe that more than ten thousand or thereabout were converted to our faith; and because we, being few in number, could not occupy or even visit many parts of the land, many souls (Woe is me!) have perished, and exceeding many do perish, for lack of preachers of the word of the Lord."

A true missionary soul this, despite his narrow outlook, and well worthy are he and his four martyred comrades of being enrolled among the Apostles of India. Yet of their work nothing permanent remained. They were but as voices crying in the night: and the voices were few and the night was long. All through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries India had indeed its visitors from Christian Europe, but no Christian apostle succeeded Jordanus. At the gate of the Orient still sat the grim Mohammedan; and not until that guard should be removed *or another gateway be found*, would apostles

from European Christendom have full scope for their message and their powers.

Two years ere the fifteenth century closed the other gateway was found, when on the 20th May, 1498, Vasco da Gama, who had sailed from Portugal eleven months before, dropped anchor at Calicut. That was a momentous day for India, for it saw the beginning of the inrush from the Western world which has had such tremendous consequences on India's history and her people's life. And then too, in the providence of God, was transferred to the Churches of the West the responsibility for the evangelising of the country to which the open way had at last been found.

## VII.

Nearly fifteen hundred years lie between the Apostolate of St. Thomas and the arrival at Calicut of Vasco da Gama, and through those many centuries Christian efforts in India, as we have seen, had never entirely ceased. Yet when one seeks to summarise the results achieved they prove to be most disappointingly small. In a remote corner of India, in the territory of a people separated from the main stream of Indian life by geographical and other barriers, there is found existing a Christian Church, of ancient lineage indeed and surprisingly respectable in social status, but unprogressive in religious life, numerically very small in comparison with the



vast population of India, and as a spiritual influence upon India's peoples almost negligible. This is all, after fifteen hundred years! One cannot but be impressed with the striking contrast which India thus presents to Europe, in regard to the reception given to the Christian religion. Within five hundred years after the birth of Christ all Europe was at least nominally Christian, and long before the fifteenth century ended there was scarcely a department of European life and thought that did not reflect the influence of the Christian Church. For Christianity, Europe registers a sweeping victory, while India records an advance so slight as to amount almost to a defeat.

How is this striking difference between West and East to be explained? Some contributing causes of a general nature are easily discernible. The isolation of the nascent Indian Church from the dominant Christian nations of the West, especially after the insertion of the Mohammedan wedge, accounts for much. So completely was the Church of Malabar cut off from the centres of ecclesiastical life and spiritual stimulus, and that too at a time in its own evolution when its religious knowledge was elementary and its grip on the fundamentals not over-strong, that the wonder rather is that isolation did not spell for Indian Christianity extinction. Much too is due to the persistent Western trend of the more vigorous and progressive branches of the Christian Church. This was as favourable to Europe

as it was unfavourable to India. The Church's face was ever turned to the West, and not until the pillars of Hercules had been reached and the remoter Northern nations of Europe had also been Christianised, did the Eastern world loom up before the consciousness of Western Christendom as a world which was likewise waiting for the Gospel. Yet again, India's lack of a common language, such as the Roman Empire had given to Europe and which there greatly facilitated the advance of a common religion, was a heavy handicap for India's Church.

That these and other general causes had something to do with the non-progressive character of Indian Christianity is beyond question. Yet they are not sufficient to explain its practical failure to expand. The living seed had been sown in Indian soil, the true leaven had been introduced into Indian life. That being so, more than general considerations of isolation and language difficulty are required, to account for the exceeding sparseness of the harvest, and the slowness of the leavening. Of the men who sowed the seed, and introduced the leaven, we know far too little to say that things might have been different had they worked differently. What little is known of them evokes reverence and gratitude for brave men who fought a good fight against heavy odds, and who held up the light in front of overwhelming darkness.

Yet a survey of their work reveals at least three factors that have contributed to the tardiness of its

progress, and of these one is certainly the lack of continuity which marked the missionary efforts of these fifteen centuries. The efforts made were spasmodic, intermittent, and often quite unrelated. Save in Malabar no permanent base with a permanent organisation seems ever to have been secured, and with the death or departure of each devoted worker the work usually languished and died. In all the centuries India never developed that institutional Christianity which kept the Church alive through the dark ages in Europe. For this there was needed either such large accessions to the Church from the people of the country as to make it powerful from within, or continued and increasing reinforcements of workers from the foreign missionary base. But neither requirement was supplied. Native accessions were few, the reinforcements from the Christian sources were also few ; and in consequence, except in Malabar, no Church of Christ rooted itself in Indian soil and life.

A second factor which partly accounts for the non-progressiveness of Indian Christianity is found in the character of the one Church that did take outward shape. The Syrian Church of Malabar throughout these centuries seems never to have possessed the missionary spirit in measure sufficient to impel its sons to missionary endeavour. It had enough spiritual vitality to save itself from extinction, but not enough to awake concern as to the souls of others. No apostle went forth from it to preach to

the Hindus the Gospel of Jesus Christ, no theologian whose name and influence abides ever appeared among its sons, no quickening breath of the Spirit seems ever to have swept over its members, transforming them into evangelists. A decorous ritual, a decent respectability in the eyes of the people of the land, and a recurring contact with the Churches of Eastern Christendom as each new Bishop was received,—these were sufficient for its desires, and no experience of persecution ever drove home the need of qualities deeper and more vital. It may with considerable truth be said that the bane of the Syrian Church was its worldly prosperity. The social status which it acquired, at the hands of the tolerant Hindu rulers, had the effect of giving it something of the character of a caste, and the limited life inseparable from all castes inevitably followed. The time was to come when persecution and adversity would lift the Church of Malabar to a higher level of thought and duty, but at the end of fifteen hundred years that time had not yet arrived.

Beyond any doubt however the supreme factor in restricting the progress of Christianity in India in those earlier periods was the factor which works supremely still. It lay, and lies, in the enormous strength of Hinduism itself. In its conquest of Europe the Christian Church met with nothing that can be compared with the hostile forces it encountered in India. In Europe the old paganism, as a religious force, was dead. Where it survived it was but a

superstition, and the task of the Church was in consequence much simplified and eased. But in India the conditions were very different. There Christianity was confronted with a religion deep-rooted in the popular life, powerful in its hold, and real and living to its supporters. Even in our own day it has needed the combined forces of modern Christendom to make visible headway against it, and create for the religion of Christ a truly Indian home. That the spasmodic efforts of the few brave and steadfast men who, heedless of the gigantic difficulties, sought to storm the citadel, should have had but little result, is no matter for wonder. With the fuller knowledge we now possess of the extreme arduousness of the enterprise, it is evident to-day that no other issue was ever possible.

### VIII.

There remains the question of whether any *indirect* influence on Hinduism resulted from the long-continued presence in India of a Christian Church and a Christian people. In our own time such indirect influence is very marked, and as a factor working for the Christianisation of India is of the first importance. Is there no evidence that in the earlier centuries also, feeble though was the Christian light in those days, yet some of the rays impinged upon finer Hindu souls, and found subsequent reflection in their life and teaching? The question is one of the most interesting and fas-

cinating which Indian Christianity presents, and it has been diligently canvassed by able Orientalists of Britain, America, and the Continent of Europe : but without any unanimous finding. There is little doubt as to the possibility of Hinduism having been thus influenced by Christianity, since from the beginning of the Christian era there has existed the necessary contact between India and Christian lands. From the early centuries Christian men have lived in India, sons of India have visited Christian lands, and some acquaintance with the Christian religion has been possible for inquiring Hindus who thus came in contact with Christianity. But as to whether these possibilities became actualities there is much diversity of opinion. The evidence adduced in favour of their position, by those who maintain a positive Christian influence to have been exerted, is not overwhelmingly convincing, yet it is sufficiently strong to encourage the belief that the Christian leaven was not wholly inoperative. Traces of what seem to be Christian influences are found along two lines of India's religious life ; in the early Epics of Hinduism, and in the distinctive religious developments which took place in the Hinduism of mediaeval and post-mediaeval times.

Of the early Epics, the " Scriptures " of Hinduism, the *Mahabharata*, ranks among the highest. The later stages of its composition date from the second century to the fifth century A.D., and a passage which tells of the voyage of three pilgrims to the

“White Country” has been widely considered to convey the impression produced upon these Indian pilgrims by a service they had witnessed in a Christian church.

“Then we beheld glistening men, white, appearing like the moon adorned with all the auspicious marks, with their palms ever joined in supplication, praying to the Supreme Being, with their faces turned to the East: the prayer which is offered by these great-hearted ones is called the mental prayer.

“Then we suddenly saw a glory diffused, like that of a thousand suns shining at once, and those men quickly advanced towards that glory joyfully exclaiming, ‘Hail to thee!’ We heard the loud sound of them exclaiming, and knew that these men were offering the oblation to God, but we were rendered suddenly unconscious by his splendour and saw nothing, deprived of the use of our eyes, void of strength and senseless. But we only heard a loud cry uttered: ‘Thou art victorious, O Lotus-eyed. Hail to thee, O Creator of the Universe! Hail to thee, the eldest Son of the Supreme Soul!’ Such was the sound heard by us, accompanied with teaching. In the meanwhile, a pure wind, laden with perfumes, brought heavenly flowers and healing drugs.”<sup>1</sup>

As an impressionist account of a eucharistic celebration in a church, say, at Alexandria, this may reasonably enough be interpreted, but as an evidence of religious influence exercised on Hinduism it proves nothing.

For this purpose far more telling is the detailed examination which has been made of the *Bhagavad Gita*, with a view to showing the numerous parallelisms which exist between this lofty book, the “Gospel” to countless Hindus to-day, and the

<sup>1</sup> Mahab., xii., 12, l. 776.

writings of the Fourth Evangelist. The Gita, which seems to have been inserted in the Mahabharata about the second century, stands alone in that vast work for its high spiritual tone, and the investigations, notably of Professor Hopkins of Yale University, show its many remarkable similarities with the teaching of the profoundest of Scripture writers. Some examples may be quoted:—

“The world was made by Him and the world knew Him not ! He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not !” (St. John i. 10-11).

“Men distraught know Me not in My highest nature ; I take a human form and they honour Me not !” (G. ix. 11).

“I know whence I came . . . but ye know not.” (St. John viii. 14).

“I have come through many births and thou also : I know them all : thou knowest them not !” (G. iv. 5).

“He that loveth Me . . . I shall love him !” (St. John xiv. 21).

“I love them that are devoted to Me : even as they are to Me, so I to them.” (G. iv. 11).

“This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send.” (St. John xvii. 13).

“He who knows Me, the Lord of the World, is freed from all sins (i.e. gets life eternal).”<sup>1</sup> (G. x. 3).

If the writer of the Gita did not know the Gospel according to St. John, he must have himself possessed a truly Johannine spirit.

One further trace of Christian influence working

<sup>1</sup> Hopkins, *India, Old and New*.



upon the Hindu religious books and teaching is found by many in the marked change in the *Krishna* cult, which took place about the sixth century. Up to that time Krishna was regarded as a teacher and a warrior, but deity had never been ascribed to him. In the later *Puranas* however Krishna is deified, and is worshipped not as one grown to manhood in whom deity resides, but as a Divine Babe beloved of his Mother, and himself loving all. Stories of his birth and youth are told strongly reminiscent of the stable of Bethlehem, the wrath of Herod, and the massacre of the Innocents. Now by the sixth century we know that Christianity was firmly rooted in Western India : and, concludes Professor Hopkins, "it is impossible to doubt that at least this (later) form of Krishnaism derives from a Christian source. So decided is the alteration, and so direct is the connection between this later phase of Krishnaism and the Christianity of the early centuries of our era, that it is no expression of extravagant fancy, but a sober historical statement, that in all probability the Hindus of this cult of the Madonna and Child have in reality, though unwittingly, been worshipping the Christ-child for fully a thousand years." Yet, even so, this does not necessarily mean that the Hindus who so worshipped were permeated by the Christ spirit. The Krishna cult fosters other things so antagonistic to Christ, that when it is said that Hinduism annexed some of the tales of the Child Christ, and re-told them in a garbled form of the

child Krishna, all is said that is really warranted. Of any Christian spiritual influence exerted on Hinduism through this annexation there is no trace.

It is along the other line of investigation that really strong evidence is forthcoming, of a leavening influence having been exercised by Christianity on the religious thought and life of India, during those long centuries when the Indian Church showed little growth. In the beginning of the ninth century India's greatest teacher next to Buddha, *Sankara*, had won the whole of India to an uncompromising Vedantism, in which personality as a feature either in God or in man disappeared.

The doctrine of *Maya*, or Illusion, was widely accepted, which taught the unreality of the Universe, and proclaimed that salvation was to be found in realising one's identity with the Absolute, the path to such realisation lying in the power to disregard the great Illusion. Against this philosophic Monism the heart of the common man revolted, and mostly from Southern India there issued a noble succession of teachers, who proclaimed the personality of God and of man, and preached a salvation which came through devotional faith (*Bhakti*) in a personal God.

Tiruvallur, Manikka-vasagar, Ramanuja, Ramananda, and Tulsi Das, from the ninth to the seventeenth centuries, enriched their country with a literature of devotion and God-communion that is treasured to the present day, and has been powerful

in arousing in the soul of the people thoughts and longings of much spiritual beauty. *Tiruvallur* indeed, the first of these and the author of the popular Tamil *Kurral*, is more of a moralist than a religious guide, but the others are men whose souls thirst after God, the living God. *Ramanuja*, whose date is about A.D. 1100, was the real pioneer in this spiritual revolt ; and those who came after owed to him much of their inspiration. He has been termed the "Hindu Protestant" from the ardour with which he emphasised the personal God, the human incarnation of God in Vishnu, the eternal distinction between right and wrong, and salvation by grace alone. Three hundred years later *Ramananda*, a visitor from the North of India, was drawn by admiration of Ramanuja's teaching to journey to the South, and there had his soul set on fire. Returning North he proclaimed the brotherhood of all men and the abolition of caste, and through Kabir, one of his disciples, was the motive influence in the creation of the Sikh religion. To *Tulsi Das*, a spiritual descendant of Ramananda, it was given in the sixteenth century to enrich his country with one of its most prized religious poems, a vernacular version of the Ramayana. To Tulsi Das salvation by faith in the personal God was the central fact of all religion. His own prayer to God reveals the reformer's soul:—

"Lord, look Thou upon me—nought can I do myself. Whither can I go? To whom but Thee can I tell my sorrow?

Oft have I turned my face from Thee and grasped the things of this world, but Thou art the fount of mercy ; turn not Thou Thy face from me. . . . When I looked away from Thee I had no eyes of faith to see Thee where Thou art, but Thou art all-seeing. I am but an offering cast before Thee. . . . Remember Thy mercy and Thy might, then cast Thine eyes upon me and claim me as Thy slave, Thy very own. . . . Lord, Thy ways ever give joy unto my heart. Tulsi is Thine alone, and, O God of mercy, do unto him as seemeth good unto Thee.”<sup>1</sup>

Still following this spiritual succession, and slightly overstepping the period with which we are dealing, we come in the seventeenth century on a South-Indian Saivite sect, the *Sittars* or *Siddhas*, who in their devotion to the personal God, their rapturous mystic communion with Him, and their rooted aversion to idolatry and caste, attain heights of spiritual life and expression unsurpassed in Hinduism. Two examples of their religious literature will be sufficient testimony. In one, the speaker records his emancipation from the vanity of idolatry:—

“ How many various flowers  
Did I in bygone hours,  
Cull for the Gods, and in their honour strew :

“ In vain, how many a prayer  
I breathed into the air,  
And made with many forms obeisance due :

“ Beating my breast aloud  
How oft I called the crowd  
To drag the village car : how oft I strayed

<sup>1</sup> See Datta, *Desire of India*.

“In manhood’s prime to lave  
Sunwards the flowing wave,  
And circling Shaiva fanes, my homage paid.

“But they, the truly wise  
Who know and realise  
Where dwells the Shepherd of the Worlds, will ne’er

“To any visible shrine  
As if it were divine  
Deign to raise hands of worship or of prayer.”<sup>1</sup>

The other example reaches still higher, and forms perhaps the culminating point in the movement :—

“When Thou didst make me, Thou didst know my all :  
But I knew not of Thee. ’Twas not till light  
From Thee brought understanding of Thy ways  
That I could know. But now where’er I sit,  
Or walk, or stand, Thou art for ever near.  
Can I forget Thee ? Thou art mine, and I  
Am only Thine. E’en with these eyes, I see  
And with my heart perceive, that Thou art come  
To me as lightning from the lowering sky.

“If thy poor heart but choose the better part,  
And in this path doth worship only God,  
His heart will stoop to Thine, will take it up  
And make it His. One heart shall serve for both.”<sup>2</sup>

On reading these stanzas, says Dr. Barnett, the translator, “the inexperienced reader is tempted to wonder whether ‘Sivavayakar’ (the writer) was not a worshipper at the local Christian church”. Yet many most experienced readers, and life-long

<sup>1</sup> Translated by Bishop Caldwell.

<sup>2</sup> See Barnett, *The Heart of India*, p. 42.

students of the Hindu religions, have wondered whether the men who wrote such spiritually uplifting strains, and the whole reforming succession of which these men were part, had not come into touch with Christian influences. Certainly the development which they introduced and passionately fostered is, in many of its aspects, a striking approximation to Christian positions. This all admit, even those who cannot go further : and that many do go farther is due to the striking fact that these reforming influences emanated either directly or indirectly from Southern India,—the land where Christianity was early rooted and where Christian apostles had been most active. Tiruvallur lived at St. Thomé, or Mailapur, where he was in close proximity to Christian influences. So too was it with Ramanuja, and although by his time the Christianity at St. Thomé had become largely submerged by paganism, yet from an inquiring mind the underlying spiritual truth would not be concealed. Certain it is that Christian influences were abroad in South India through those centuries, and equally certain is it that the South-Indian reformers approximated in their teaching to the purer tenets of the Western faith. More may not with absolute surety be affirmed, yet many will be inclined to agree with the positive statement of Sir George Grierson, one of the most eminent Oriental scholars of to-day, and the leading authority on the *Bhakti* element in Hinduism ;—

“It was in Southern India that Christianity as a doctrine exercised the greatest influence on Hinduism generally. Although the conceptions of the fatherhood of God, and of *Bhakti* were indigenous to India, they received an immense impetus owing to the beliefs of Christian communities reacting upon the mediaeval Bhagavata reformers of the South. With this leaven their teaching swept over Hindustan, bringing balm and healing to a nation gasping in its death-throes amid the horrors of alien invasion. It is not overstating the case to say that in this reformation India rediscovered faith and love, and the fact of this discovery accounts for the passionate enthusiasm of the contemporary religious writings. In them we behold the profoundest depths of the human heart laid bare with a simplicity and freedom from self-consciousness unsurpassed in any literature with which the writer is acquainted.”<sup>1</sup>

That it is permissible to accept this reading of India's religious history in mediaeval times, and in the judgment of many competent students much more than permissible, is a refreshing joy to those who gaze regretfully on the very limited advance of the Indian Christian Church in that same period. The leaven worked, although the visible Church showed little increase. God left not Himself without a witness, nor did the Divine Spirit cease to move upon the face of the waters.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Howell in *The Soul of India* and accorded by him his own weighty support.

## CHAPTER IV

FRANCIS XAVIER

(1506-1552)

IN the long roll of India's missionaries, until the period of modern missions is reached, there are but two names which have impressed themselves deeply on the mind of Christendom. They are the names of St. Thomas, the traditional founder of Indian Christianity, and Francis Xavier, the heroic missionary of the sixteenth century. To the one, from early days, has been given the title "The Apostle of India"; the other, with yet fuller reason, has been accorded the name "The Apostle of the Indies," and as such is honoured to-day by the whole Christian world. His own communion has given him a place among its Indian missionaries which is quite unique. Churches many bear his name; countless prayers are offered daily by Indian Christians, in which the intercession of St. Francis Xavier with Almighty God is earnestly besought; and among the most venerated spots in the Far East, a place of pilgrimage for tens of thousands, is the old church in Goa, where



in a silver coffin repose the remains of the great departed.

Protestants do not share these methods of honouring the saintly dead, but they come little, if at all, behind their Roman Catholic brethren in their appreciation of the man and their reverence for his memory. It is true this appreciation was comparatively late in appearing, but for this tardiness the blame rests chiefly on Xavier's own Church. Like many another saint of the Roman Church he was wounded in the house of his friends. The biographies they wrote of him so teemed with stories of childish miracles and incredible prodigies, that the Protestant world had neither the patience—nor perhaps the desire—to penetrate through this outer crust to the underlying greatness. But fortunately throughout his missionary career Xavier was a voluminous, painstaking, and deeply interesting correspondent, and the letters which he wrote from the field were carefully collected and preserved by the Jesuit Society. These letters are of various styles. Some are of the nature of the Annual Report sent home by the modern worker in the mission-field, in which a careful and detailed account is given of the year's work; others are the frank and intimate confidences of one writing for no other purpose than to let a friend know how the writer and his work are faring. These letters are Xavier's true biography. The complete edition of them published at Bologna in 1795, contains no fewer

than 146 letters, and these being arranged in the order of their writing, furnish a true record of the work done, and afford a clear revealing of the inner life of the devoted worker.<sup>1</sup> It was not till the middle of the nineteenth century that to the non-Roman world this unveiling of the true Francis Xavier became generally familiar, and it is from that date that he has gained and held the admiration of all, of every Church or of no Church, who can appreciate a life of absolute devotion to a great cause.

## I.

Francis Xavier was born in 1506 at the Castle of Xavier, which nestled picturesquely at the base of the Pyrenees in the Kingdom of Navarre. He was of noble birth, being kin to the royal houses of Navarre and France, and passed his early days as a gay young courtier at the Court of the King of Navarre. At the age of eighteen he proceeded to Paris to study at its famous university, and there made his mark, for, nine years later, we find him on the university staff as a brilliant lecturer on philosophy. Up to this time his career and training had been wholly secular. A courtier, a scholar, a teacher, and through all a noted favourite in society, he had nothing of the "priest" about him. In after years this prolonged detachment from professional

<sup>1</sup> A later edition is that published at Ratisbon in 1877.

churchmen and his close association with men of the world was to prove of great advantage, enabling him to be all things to all men with an easy naturalness that gained many. Yet thoughts and communings on religion cannot have been unfamiliar, for it was a time in Europe when religion bulked large in the popular mind. Both in Germany and in France the Reformation was in full flow. In Navarre Protestantism was in the ascendant, and teachers and pastors of the Reformed faith were in daily evidence at the Court. In Paris itself the Lutheran teaching was spreading fast, and for a brief period the King was more than tolerant. The great Calvin was there at the same time as Xavier, planning his famous book *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, and not improbably may have met the future missionary. Indeed it would appear that the Reformed teaching, and the men who advocated it, began to have so strong an attraction for the brilliant young philosopher that, had it not been for the yet stronger influence of Ignatius Loyola, which withdrew him from the dangerous circle, Xavier might have been won to the Reformed Church. Writing to his brother at this time (1535), Xavier says:—

“I declare in my conscience, and as it were, under my hand and seal, that my obligations to him (i.e. Loyola) are far greater than a whole life devoted to his service can repay, or even partially satisfy. . . . But the benefit he has conferred of highest value is that of fortifying my youthful imprudence

against the deplorable dangers arising from my familiarity with men breathing out heresy, such as are many of my contemporaries in Paris in these times, who would insidiously undermine faith and morality, beneath the specious mask of liberality and superior intelligence.”<sup>1</sup>

Ignatius Loyola, who did this service to Rome and disservice to the Reformed cause, was then planning the formation of the great Jesuit Society which was destined to achieve conspicuous success in rolling back the wave of the Reformation from the Latin nations. He had marked out Xavier as one admirably suited by birth, character, and abilities to help him in the work, and gave him no rest until his end was attained. In 1534, when the initial bond was formed by Loyola and six like-minded associates, which was to develop a few years later into “*The Company of Jesus*,” Xavier was one of the seven: and of them all none was more conspicuous for the keenness of his ardour or his eagerness to endure hardships in the interests of their cause. The Company was primarily formed for converting “unbelievers,” under which comprehensive name were included Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics: and when a call came summoning Xavier to prosecute this work in a far distant sphere he obeyed with joyful alacrity.

India was the destined field and John III., King

<sup>1</sup>This and subsequent quotations are from Venn's *Missionary Life of Xavier*—unless otherwise stated. He quotes from the *Bologna* ed.

of Portugal, was the agent of Divine Providence in giving the call. Portugal had now been a power in Western India for forty years, and her possessions there were her greatest pride and richest treasury. But it is to her high credit that throughout the palmy days of her power she thought almost as much of gaining India to the Christian Church, as of holding it for the Crown of Portugal. Her methods of achieving the former purpose were often not such as we can approve to-day, yet the spirit that prompted them and the recognition they gave of the Christian responsibilities of Empire, merit warm commendation. In these respects Portugal set a standard which Protestant Powers have not always equalled. Every fleet that made the annual voyage from Lisbon to the East carried numbers of Franciscan and Dominican soldiers of the Cross, as well as reinforcements for the army of the Portuguese Crown. Wherever a trading fort was established along the Indian coast, there also a church or monastery or both quickly appeared, and within the forts and also in their immediate neighbourhood aggressive missionary work was done, foremost among the workers being the Franciscans. In 1534 Goa was raised to the dignity of a bishopric, and under its bishop were the numerous priests and friars who laboured at the many centres on Western India, and throughout the Eastern Seas, where the Portuguese had established settlements. Both King Manuel I. and King John III., whose

combined reigns extended over fifty years (1495-1557), ardently desired the Christianising of their Eastern territories, and by their royal influence and generous subsidy gave the Church in India unstinted support. King John was particularly zealous, and like many another was impatient when the progress seemed slow. To those who know the country where the earlier Franciscans laboured and the people whom they sought to win, the progress actually made in forty years seems remarkable. But such was not the opinion of the Portuguese monarch, and he decided, in supersession of the older agencies, to employ this new Society which was already impressing men by the stern discipline of its rule and the devotedness of its members. Accordingly on April 7th, 1541, Xavier with two associates sailed for India.

Never has a Christian missionary gone forth with so many substantial tokens of royal approval. Writing on the eve of his departure Xavier says:—

“We leave loaded with favours by his Majesty, and are to accompany the Viceroy whom he sends this year to India, and to whom he has specially commended us.”

With him Xavier bore letters from the Pope, appointing him Papal Nuncio to the Eastern world and giving him supreme authority over all the missions and churches already existing in these parts, while by the King he was furnished with an order to the Portuguese officials to supply him

with everything needed for his suitable maintenance. With this rare array of recommendations, and possessing no first-hand knowledge of the immobility of the East, it is little wonder that Xavier set sail with the confident hope of speedily winning India to the Church of Christ. That spiritual earnestness and holy living would be required of him he knew well, but these he was prepared to give in fullest measure. Not through fault of his would his sacred mission fail.

“Those,” he writes, “who are acquainted with India, assure us that as soon as the natives of India have for guides and teachers such as we are, that is those whose whole conduct is above the suspicion of avarice, they will receive the religion of Christ. If we carry with us into that country the spirit of mortification, the absolute renunciation of worldly advantages, the perfect disinterestedness of which we here give a pattern, there is no doubt, they say, but that in a few years we shall have made the conquest of two or three Kingdoms.”

So much for the recorded expectations of this truly great crusader. Let a brief narrative of his Indian crusade, reserving for the present detailed comment thereon, show how they were fulfilled.

## II.

May 6th, 1542, is a notable day in the calendar of the Indian Church, for it was on that day, after a tedious voyage of thirteen months, that Xavier landed at Goa, then the brilliant capital of the

Portuguese power, the seat of the Viceroy, the scene of oriental luxury, royal display, and abounding open profligacy. Besides the Portuguese military and civilian elements Goa contained a large population of mixed blood, the result of the policy of the government which systematically married the soldiers to native women, after these had been baptized, in many cases forcibly, and in all with little or no knowledge of the meaning of the rite. The object of this policy was to raise up indigenous recruits for the army and thus do away with the necessity for yearly drafts from Portugal. An abundant sphere for spiritual work was thus provided by Goa itself, but agencies for that work were already there. The city had its spacious cathedral, its bishop and its canons, its Franciscan convent and its college for training one hundred native youths for the service of the Church. This last especially appealed to Xavier as a useful agent for his work, and he speedily took steps which resulted later in the transfer of the college from the hands of the Franciscans to those of the Jesuits.

But Goa did not supply the sphere in search of which Xavier had come to India. His mission was not to his own countrymen, but to the Hindus; so a stay of five months sufficed, in which he learned something of the country and its ways, and experienced too those fits of alternating depression and exaltation to which few missionaries are strangers. Writing home at this time, he says:—



“The miseries of a long voyage: the dealing with the sins of other people while you are oppressed by your own; a permanent abode among the heathen, and this in a land which is scorched by the rays of the sun,—all these things are indeed trials. But if they be endured for the cause of God, they become great comforts and the sources of many heavenly pleasures. I am persuaded that those who truly love the cross of Christ esteem a life thus passed in affliction to be a happy one, and regard an avoidance of the cross or an exemption from it as a kind of death. For what death is more bitter than to live without Christ when once we have tasted His preciousness, or to desert Him that we may follow our own desires? Believe me, no cross is to be compared to this cross. On the other hand how happy it is to live in dying daily, and in mortifying our own will, and in seeking not our own but the things that are Jesus Christ’s!”

It was in this high spirit of consecration that Xavier proceeded towards the end of 1542 to the district in India with which his name is imperishably associated. This was the extreme southern coast east from Cape Comorin, the inhabitants of which were the humble pearl-fishers of Tuticorin, and here, among these simple, lowly, and in many points even degraded folk, he lived and laboured for over two years. A great change this from the Court of Navarre and the halls of the University of Paris, but Xavier found a joy there such as cultured Europe had never afforded. Nor does this surprise us: it is a common experience of missionary life. But what is surprising is that a field of this particular nature should have been selected by one of Xavier’s special gifts and extended aims, and that other fields manifestly more suited should have been passed

by. The choice, however, was not Xavier's own. It was urged upon him by the Viceroy who was at least partly moved, it would seem, by the thought of thus strengthening the Portuguese hold on that district. Already Portugal was recognised by the pearl-fishers as in some way their sovereign Power, the result of their having been delivered some time previously from the hands of Saracen pirates by the timely help of a Portuguese fleet. In return for this boon the pearl-divers had acknowledged themselves to be the subjects of Portugal and had given their pledge to accept the Christian religion. No time had been lost in sending to their district a good Franciscan Father, Michael Vass, by whom thousands had been baptized; and now to complete the work thus begun Xavier's aid was asked, and readily given.

How did he proceed, this 'cultured man of European fame, when thus placed, after only six months in India, amidst some of the rudest tribes that India possesses? His own letters give a full and clear account and by their frankness and humility dispel many cherished traditions. His great initial difficulty, as might be expected, was his ignorance of Tamil, the language of the people, and with all his admirable powers Xavier by his own confession was no great linguist. He never made much progress with any of the languages of the East, and in this his first field the difficulty oppressed him greatly. His method of meeting it had

at least the merit of simplicity. As soon as he arrived in the district he got the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, and the Ten Commandments, translated into Tamil. These he then committed to memory, and after four months felt himself to be sufficiently equipped for beginning his work. In the district were some thirty villages and to each village he devoted a fortnight. His procedure is told in one of his best-known letters, written after a year's experience :—

“I have begun to go through all the villages of this coast with bell in hand, collecting together a large concourse both of boys and men. Bringing them twice a day into a convenient place I gave them Christian instruction. The boys, in the space of a month, have committed all to memory beautifully. Then I told them to teach what they had learned to their parents, household, and neighbours. On Sundays I called together the men and women, boys and girls, into a sacred edifice. They came to hear with great alacrity, and with an ardent desire to hear. Then I began with the confession of the Holy Trinity, the Lord's Prayer, the Angelic Salutation, the Apostles' Creed, pronouncing them in their own language with a clear voice. All followed me in the repetition, in which they take an uncommon pleasure. Then I went through the Creed alone, pausing upon each article, asking whether they believed without any doubt. All, in an equally confident tone, with their hands in the form of a cross over their breasts, affirmed that they truly believed it. . . . In like manner I inculcate the precepts of the Decalogue . . . add the Angelic Salutation . . . and afterwards baptize those who have been instructed. The close of the ceremony is a *Salve Regina*, by which we implore the help and assistance of the Blessed Virgin. How great is the multitude of those who are gathered into the fold of Christ you may learn from this that it often happens to me, that my hands fail through the fatigue of baptizing: for I have baptized a whole

village in a single day: and often, by repeating so frequently the Creed and other things, my voice and strength have failed me."

In every village he followed the same procedure, and took steps on leaving to secure permanence for the impressions made:—

"In each village I leave one copy of the *Christian Instruction*. I appoint all to assemble on festival days, and to chant the rudiments of the Christian faith: and in each of the villages I appoint a fit person to preside. For their wages the Viceroy, at my request, has assigned 4000 gold fanams. Multitudes in these parts are only not Christians because none are found to make them Christians."

So it was that Xavier "made Christians". One is constrained to say, "*Sancta Simplicitas*"! When his methods are kept in mind there is nothing incredible in the statement which occurs in one of his letters (though the authenticity of the passage is by some seriously questioned), that in one month he baptized ten thousand Christians. Baptism was ever his great aim, and his abiding consolation in the absence of clearer evidence of Christian progress. In twelve months he baptized one thousand infants who were moribund, "whom God called away from these parts to His heavenly mansion before they had lost the robe of innocence". So too, when realising how serious a hindrance was his ignorance of the language, the thought of the many baptisms administered and their efficacy came as cheering compensation. Some words, written in August, 1544, after

he had been two years in the field, are significant of much:—

“Here I am almost alone . . . and I find it a most inconvenient position to be in the midst of a people of an unknown tongue, without the assistance of a (capable) interpreter. . . . Conceive . . . what kind of sermons I am able to address to the assemblies, when they who should repeat my address to the people do not understand me, nor I them. I ought to be an adept in dumb show. Yet I am not without work, for I want no interpreter to baptize infants just born, or those which their parents bring: nor to relieve the famished and the naked who come in my way. So I devote myself to these two kinds of good works, and do not regard my time as lost.”

After a year's work among the pearl-fishers east of Comorin, where a generous Christian beneficence was as conspicuous as his ceaseless and earnest evangelising, Xavier turned to the district west of the Cape, and met with like success among the Travancoreans. But with all his enthusiasm over these speedy and vast accessions to the visible Church, he cherished no illusions as to the true spiritual condition of his converts. His letters to Europe were purposely optimistic: it is in the franker correspondence with brother missionaries that his full mind on such matters is revealed.

“In the presence of a Portuguese,” he writes in one letter of the kind, “take good care not to reprove or condemn the native Christians. On the contrary defend them, praise them, apologise for them on every occasion. Point out how short a time it is since they embraced the faith: that they are still in infancy . . . that far from being surprised at the defects of so rude a nation, one can only wonder that they are not worse.”

This is tender, chivalrous and not unhopeful counsel, but there were times when the iron entered into his soul, and the missionary spoke in other tones. It was in such an hour of disillusionment that he wrote to a brother :—

“God give you patience, which is the first requisite in dealing with this nation. Imagine to yourself that you are in purgatory, and that you are washing away the guilt of your evil deeds.” And again he wrote :—

“Again and again I beseech you to behave towards these men, who are the filth of the human race, as good fathers do to wicked children. Don’t be cast down however great their wickedness.”

Not once nor twice but repeatedly this note appears, and it is indeed impossible to peruse his letters without feeling that, as time went on, Xavier’s hopes of a Christian India grew less strong, and after three years had passed we find him casting his eyes farther afield. What finally decided him was the utter failure of a semi-political scheme he strongly urged, for the annexation to Portugal and to the Christian Church of the Kingdom of Jaffnapatam in the north of Ceylon. The King of Jaffnapatam had massacred the native Christians on the Island of Manaar (which lies between Ceylon and Tuticorin), and when Xavier, in the hour of his grief and resentment, learned that a brother of the King was willing to be baptized, and to bring with him into the Church the whole population of the Kingdom, if only Portugal would place him on the throne, the way to con-

quest and a great Christian triumph seemed open. Xavier urged on the Viceroy active military measures. To the King of Portugal he wrote, "In Jaffnapatam, and the opposite coast more than 100,000 will be easily added to the Church of Christ," and then hastened himself to Negapatam, the nearest Indian port, there to wait the expected *dénouement*. But it never came, and Xavier, keenly disappointed, forthwith decided to leave India behind him, and seek other and more hopeful fields of action. Portuguese rule embraced the great islands of the India Archipelago, and for these Xavier sailed in the beginning of 1545, taking ship at St. Thomé, after he had placed priest and teachers in charge of the field he was forsaking.

This abandonment of India, after three years' labour, has been severely criticised, and by none more severely than by some of Xavier's own Church and Order; but scarcely with perfect justice. Xavier had been sent out to the East, not as an ordinary missionary, but as Director of Missions. His directorate embraced the whole East, and however men may judge of his Indian work and his motives in leaving it, there is nothing inharmonious with the wider aims and duties of his office, in his decision, after three years in India, to visit the farther parts of his most extensive diocese.

### III.

On Xavier's work in the Moluccas we cannot dwell here. In its methods and successes it resem-

bled his Indian work, and like it, also lasted for nearly three years. At the expiry of that period he returned to India, reaching its shores in January, 1548. There he remained until April, 1549, a period of fifteen months which, for the Indian Church, was by far the most important section of Xavier's life. For the first time he now took up in earnest the work of *Director of Jesuit Missions in the East*. Till now this had been impossible, as there had been neither workers to direct nor work to organise, nor did he possess the needful experience for the task. But six years of personal missionary labour in different parts of the wide field had given the experience; and as during the same period a succession of Jesuit missionaries had continued to arrive at Goa, Xavier now found himself with a staff of at least twenty of his own Order, men vowed to implicit obedience and zealous for the progress of their cause. Organisation and development were now possible, and proceeded apace. Jesuit missionaries were posted at all the more important Portuguese settlements in the East. The older missions of the Franciscans were gradually superseded, and the process was begun which was to result in giving to the Jesuits for very many years a practical monopoly in Indian Missions.

Of this work Xavier was sole and absolute controller. Daily reports of their doings had to be written by all the missionaries, and forwarded at stated intervals to the Director that he might know



exactly how they fared ; and in the letters of counsel and instruction sent by him to the missionaries is revealed the intimacy of his knowledge of the circumstances and needs of every worker in the field. Much of the counsel thus given might with advantage be followed by missionaries of any Church, such as his advice to discourage lawsuits among native Christians, to heal their quarrels, and to bear tenderly with their failings. Equally excellent too for the most part are his instructions concerning the personal life and conduct of the missionaries, and the great need of their being an example to the flock in holy living. Shrewd knowledge of men marks his counsel as to the ordinary conversation in which the missionaries are to engage with Portuguese civilians and soldiers : it is to turn on spiritual subjects.

“If you speak to them of nothing but these matters, one of two things will happen : either they will court your society because it interests them, and so they will profit by it : or they will avoid it because it wearies them, and so they will not rob you of the hours set apart for your spiritual duties.”

And nothing could be better than this general guiding principle :—

“I enjoin upon you above all things,—and I cannot often enough repeat it to you—that wherever you bend your steps, or wherever you may be called, you should try to make yourself beloved by every one, by rendering to them kind services, by good manners, and by seasoning your reproofs with gentleness and modesty.”

Here and there occur counsels of a less spiritual tone, in which the mark of what is popularly called "Jesuitry" appears. This is the case when he urges the missionaries to conciliate the governor by every means in their power; and yet more visibly when he advises them to find out all the private history and the besetting sins of the men they have to deal with, that so they may have a strong hold upon them. These are blemishes which cannot be ignored, but it would be an error in judgment to emphasise them. The general tone of his correspondence is lofty and spiritual, yet wise, prudent and kindly. Where encouragement is needed and deserved he gives it. Where reproof is required it is not withheld, but is administered with a stern gravity which must have told, though even there the kindly touch of a brother man is not wanting. Kindliness and understanding governed all his dealings with his brethren in the field, and his sympathy with them was very real. Of this perhaps the best evidence is given in a letter of instruction which he sent to Father Paul Camerte at Goa, who was to act for him as Director during his absence in Japan. By its counsels the letter reveals the principles on which Xavier himself sought to work:—

"Whenever these brothers of our Society who itinerate among the villages of Cape Comorin, or Nicholas at Quilon, or Cyprian at Madras, or Melchior Gonzalez at Bassein, or Francis Perez at Malacca, or John Beira and the associates at Moluccas,

write to you, you must immediately set about their business with all diligence, and at any inconvenience, whether it be to request your interest with the Viceroy or the Bishop, whose assistance may possibly be necessary to them, or any other spiritual or temporal aid or relief which they may stand in need of. You must also confer with Antonio Gomez, that he may promptly and fully transact those matters which belong to his department.

“In writing to those who, amidst sufferings and exhaustion, are bearing the heat and burden of the day, be careful that you never blot the page with the smallest drop of bitterness. Let the accents of authority be expressed only in love and tenderness. Let no tinge or shadow of scolding, of bad feeling, or of anything which might wound or grieve them, ever enter your mind. Supply promptly, kindly, and liberally, whatever they require, whether it be food, clothing, or anything for retaining or restoring health. For you must compassionate their great and continual labours both day and night in the service of God, unmitigated by earthly consolation. I now speak more especially of those who have the care of the churches at Moluccas and Comorin, for they are weighed down by a most heavy cross. Beware, in the name of God, of letting them remain in need, or of forcing them to ask twice for what you know they require, for the solace of their minds, or for the support of their bodies. By the failure of such supplies their spirits will infallibly sink and faint. It is such a just and all-important duty in those who guard the camp to assist their brethren who are fighting, that I should not hesitate to charge you, in the name of God and of our Father Ignatius, to discharge this duty with the utmost diligence, cheerfulness, and completeness, so that nothing may be left to be done under the pressure of the last moment.”

One does not wonder that under a Director inspired by such sympathy and devotion the activities, the prestige, and the power of the Jesuit Missions in the East increased by leaps and bounds.

But despite his ability for organisation and control Xavier's own personal preference was for the direct work of a missionary. His keenest happiness was in grappling with heathenism, rescuing perishing souls from darkness, and sealing them for Christ and His Church by the holy rite of Baptism: In India and in the Moluccas he had felt this joy of the soldier of the Cross, and now a region yet farther off appealed to him. This was *Japan*. In his two previous fields he had been sorely hindered by the godless lives and hostile influence of his own countrymen. In Japan he saw virgin soil, where no defiling European foot had trod, and there he anticipated success surpassing any he had yet attained. The fascination grew, and soon India could no longer hold him. Arrangements were made for the management of the work in his absence, and early in 1549, full of hope and unquenchable zeal, he sailed for the fair islands of the farthest East. In a letter, dated February 1, 1549, on the eve of sailing, he wrote to Simon Rodriguez:—

“All my friends are stupefied with amazement that I should undertake such a long and perilous voyage: and I grieve to see their want of faith. It is true that the storms in these regions are the most violent that have ever been seen, but our Lord God rules. He reigns in these seas of China and Japan. The winds are greatly to be dreaded in these seas, and there are many sunken rocks: many ships go down in these waters, but these winds and these reefs cannot harm us unless it is the will of God. There are many pirates in these regions. They are very cruel and torture in horrible ways the prisoners who fall into their hands, before putting them to death—the

Portuguese prisoners especially—so that there are things which must cause us to tremble—but our Lord has all power over these pirates : I fear neither them nor any of the other perils. This only do I fear, that the Lord our God may chasten me for negligence in His service, because I have shown myself useless and incapable of spreading the knowledge of the name of Jesus Christ amidst the Gentiles who know Him not. But as for the perils, the toils, the terrors of which my friends tell me, I count these as nothing at all.”<sup>1</sup>

In August, 1549, the dauntless apostle reached his destination, when there followed two years of earnest and even brilliant work. They were the richest years of Xavier's missionary life, for by his labours in Japan he built up a community of Christians, which in after years numbered many thousands, and whose members, when the trial of persecution came, showed the reality of their faith by being true unto death. But not even Japan could satisfy the eager, restless spirit which burned in Xavier. When there he found that *China* was the land venerated by the Japanese above all lands : so to win Japan completely, Xavier resolved to storm China. But prior to this heroic and desperate enterprise, whose difficulty and dangers he realised, India must be visited once again and provision made for an extended absence. So back to India he sailed, and reaching Cochin in January, 1552, entered on the last, and briefest, of his three periods of Indian missionary service.

<sup>1</sup> From the French work on Xavier by Père Cros, quoted by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll in his *Carey Lecture*, 1911.

## IV.

It was a heart-breaking experience that he found waiting him. The arrangements, most carefully made for the conduct of the work prior to his leaving for Japan, had proved an utter failure, revealing the incompetence of some and the unworthiness of many of the workers in whom Xavier had trusted. Even Father Paul Camerte, to whom had been given the charge of the Goa College, and the position of Director, had proved quite unfit for the post, while the rank and file of the workers were in a state of disaffection and distressing variance. The strong hand was urgently required and a letter from Xavier to Camerte, written from Cochin, shows how bitterly disappointed the writer was that such necessity should have arisen.

“I had hoped on my return from Japan to enjoy some repose after all the fatigue I had undergone. But no! There was no comfort for me. Far from that. I found only grief upon grief, and each in succession more poignant than the preceding. I found lawsuits arising from a quarrelsome temper. Nothing is stirring around me but squabbles, disputes, divisions, to the great scandal of the people. Alas! this was not the work I so earnestly enjoined at my departure for Japan. What do I find? Insubordination: little or no obedience! Oh, my God! May Thy holy name be always praised!”

The crisis was serious, but never was the strength of Xavier more evident. Supreme authority was his and without hesitation he exercised it. Men of proved unworthiness were expelled from the Order; Camerte himself was promptly removed from the

post he had failed to adorn; and counsel, reproof and exhortation, to the many workers in the field, were dealt out with discriminating but unstinting hand. One such letter may be quoted as a sample—the letter written by Xavier to a Jesuit Father at Madras, who had acted harshly towards a junior colleague. After reproof had been given there came these touching words:—

“The above I have dictated. Recognise in what follows my own hand and heart. O Cyprian, if you knew with how much love to you I write these things, you would thank me day and night, and perhaps you would not be able to restrain your tears while reflecting upon the very tender and fervent love with which my soul burns to embrace you. Would that the arcana of the heart could be laid open in this life! Believe me, my brother Cyprian, you would clearly see yourself engraven in my inmost soul. Farewell.”

The strenuous experiences of this period must have tried Xavier sorely, and put a strain on his strength which, after seven years' residence in the tropics, he cannot have been well fitted to bear. But of this he says nothing. What concerns him most is that the lessons of this troublous time should not be lost, and that the qualities revealed as of prime importance in missionaries should in future be sedulously sought and fostered. The fundamental qualities of earnestness, devotion, and sacrifice he ever emphasises, but next to these he desires that missionaries sent to the East should be men of outstanding ability and men of peace. In writing to

Loyola he presses the need of the former quality whether the field is to be India or Japan:—

“I would ask as a suppliant upon my bended knees that you will send here a man, thoroughly known and approved by your holy and loving spirit to be made Rector of the College at Goa.” “Give me these able and learned men that the Fathers now labouring in Japan shall become their interpreters.”

It is in his letters to his fellow-workers in the field that he emphasises the need of the other quality, a love of peace:—

“Let love, benignity, and a sincere charity towards an erring brother, shine forth in your words and your looks. Everywhere men like to be cured tenderly, but in no country more than in India.”

Three crowded months sufficed to restore order to the now wide Jesuit organisations in India, and in April, 1552, Xavier sailed from Goa, never to return. In a letter to the King of Portugal, written on the eve of his departure, the quenchless devotion and the abounding hope of the great missionary is finely seen:

“It may appear a bold enterprise to go to a barbarous people (the Chinese) and a most powerful King, to reprove their sin and to preach the truth. . . . But that which gives us strength and courage is our confidence that God has put it into our minds to go. His glory is the scope and end of all my thoughts. He too has filled us with a good hope and with a firm assurance: so that trusting in his mercy, we confide in his power which infinitely exceeds that of the Emperor of China and the potentates of the whole world.”



But to enter China diplomacy was essential. As a Christian missionary Xavier would not be allowed to set foot on the soil of the flowery land, so he planned to visit it as an ambassador from the King of Portugal, unauthorised indeed, but he relied on his action meeting with royal approval. The Portuguese authorities however had not the same assurance, and when Xavier got as far on his voyage as Malacca, the Portuguese governor there refused all countenance to the embassy, and forbade the vessel in which he had come from going farther. Xavier's disappointment was intense, and his exasperation at the governor's action found expression in letters home, reporting his conduct and demanding his dismissal. But no opposition could make him abandon his cherished scheme. A passage was secured in an ordinary trading vessel, and accompanied by one lay brother, Xavier sailed as far as Sancian, a low-lying island off Canton, which was the nearest point to China where foreign ships were permitted to go. Here he landed and passed some restless weeks in planning how to reach the mainland which lay before his view. So great was the risk in landing a foreigner that it required a bribe of £300 to persuade a native merchant to run it. And even so, when the supreme moment came, Xavier's interpreter drew back and his lay brother failed him.

It was a most bitter cross, and the spiritual strain involved in bearing it, added to the physical trial

of exposure to the cold biting winds which sweep across the bleak island, proved too much. Xavier's strength gave way. His stricken spirit could fight no longer, fever laid hold on his exhausted frame, and on the 2nd day of December, 1552, the ceaseless labours of the eager and indomitable missionary came to an end. No loving hands were near to tend him. No Christian priest was there to give him the consolations of his Church. Alone, in a rude hut constructed of stakes and branches, and whose roof was scarce sufficient to shield him from the rays of the sun or protect him from the dews of night, his last hours were spent. Portuguese merchants found him as he lay dying and told later how as the last moments drew near, the face of the departing saint shone with a heavenly brightness, and with the words *In te Domine speravi,—non confundar in aeternum*, the Apostle of the Indies passed to his eternal rest.

## V.

Of the many features which mark the missionary career of Francis Xavier probably what occasions most surprise is its exceeding brevity. His whole work in the East was compressed into ten years, and of these only four and a half were devoted to India! Surely to no other Indian missionary has it been given to achieve by work so brief a name and fame so exalted and enduring. Yet in Xavier's case both name and fame are beyond possibility of

doubt. It remains to consider what were the special elements in his career which have secured for him this rare renown. They must be sought either in the *work* or in the *man*. Members of his own communion, who share his conviction as to the prime missionary aim, find them in both: Protestants, with different ideas as to what constitutes missionary success, will be more discriminating in their commendation of the work, though quite as spontaneous and sincere in their admiration of the worker.

Xavier's Indian work falls, as has been seen, into two sections, his labours as a missionary, and his work as an administrator. It is concerning the former that the judgment of later generations is gravely divided. Judged by numerical standards his success in gathering the natives of India into the Christian Church was unprecedented, and is still unparalleled. In the special field of his Indian ministry there were, prior to his arrival, some 20,000 baptized Christians. Ten years later, the most reliable estimate as to the numbers puts them at 60,000. Thus, as the result of the labours of Xavier and his co-workers, there were added in a single decade, 40,000 souls to the visible Church of Christ. And if that be enough to constitute success, Xavier was the most successful missionary the world has ever seen. But the element of quality as well as that of quantity is here essential to a right judgment; and in quality Xavier's missionary work, in the estimation of the Protestant world, was gravely deficient.

The truth is it is simply impossible for Protestants, with their convictions as to what constitutes religion, to rate Xavier's work among the pearl-fishers as of any great spiritual value. His own accounts of the methods he adopted, and the speedy way in which he "made Christians," are distressing reading. They leave behind them a sense of disappointment and humiliation that a man so great should have countenanced methods so superficial, and in general so destitute of spiritual worth. His magnifying of baptism, the purely formal and external character of much of his work, the hasty reception into the Church of multitudes whose understanding of the first principles of Christianity must have been almost *nil*,—these are defects too grave to be overlooked, and it is no surprise that the after history of those communities, where Christians were so rapidly "made," should have little that is gratifying to record. Born in ceremonialism the religion of the people has never grown to higher things.

Yet grave though these defects are, there are at least two considerations which in fairness should be kept in mind, one of which is that the defects were not in Xavier so much as in Xavier's Church. Had his work been free from these blemishes he would not have been as he most surely was, a loyal son of the Roman Church. Great and good although he was, he yet came under the spell of his ecclesiastical environment and was subject to its limitations. And

there is this other consideration. Xavier, being himself greater than his system, was in his heart dissatisfied with his Indian work, and with the spiritual standard of his Indian converts. Evidence of this has already been given, but it may easily be added to. Writing to a brother missionary in December, 1548, just before quitting India for Japan, he says:—

“If you will in imagination search throughout India, you will find that few will reach heaven either of whites or blacks, except those who depart this life under fourteen years of age, with their baptismal innocence still upon them.”

In a letter to Ignatius Loyola, written in the following month, he is even more pessimistic—an unusual feature in his letters to Europe:—

“The natives, on account of the enormity of their wickedness, are as little as possible fitted to embrace the Christian religion. They so abhor it, that they have no patience to listen to us if we introduce the subject. To ask them to become Christian is like asking them to submit to death. Hence all our labour is at present to guard those who are now Christians.”

The reiterated expression of such convictions constrains one to believe that perhaps, after all, the statement of Abbé Dubois may not be far from the truth when, after telling of the utter failure of his own forty years' work as a missionary in South India, he finds some consolation in the fact that the great Xavier had equal reason for dissatisfaction. “Xavier,” he writes, “soon discovered in the manners and prejudices of the natives an insurmountable bar

to the progress of Christianity among them, . . . and at last, entirely disheartened by the invincible obstacles he everywhere met in his apostolic career, and by the apparent impossibility of making real converts, left the country in disgust, after a stay in it of only two or three years." The judgment is too hard, but be it remembered it is that of a Roman Catholic, a Jesuit, and a missionary, whose field of labour lay not far from that which once had been Xavier's own.<sup>1</sup>

But Xavier's work was not limited to his actual missionary activities. It included also his general administration of the missions in the East. There he stands out as a figure of the first importance in the annals of Christian Missions, and in the evolution of Indian Missions both epoch-marking and epoch-making. With him, and largely through him, the change took place which converted missionary enterprise in India from a praiseworthy work of earnest individuals into a great and serious enterprise of the Church. What had hitherto been an affair of the outposts now assumed the dimensions and importance of a campaign, in whose success the honour of Christendom and especially of Christian Portugal was vitally concerned. Isolated and occasional ventures were replaced by a rapidly developing missionary organisation, whereby the work of an increasing number of missionaries was unified into

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II., where Xavier's own considered opinion is recorded in a remarkable letter.

a system and directed from one strong centre. It is true the whole credit of this does not belong to Xavier. The springs of the forward movement were in Europe, where the Christian imperialism of the Portuguese monarchs combined with the fresh missionary enthusiasm of the young Jesuit Society, to supply material resources and consecrated workers in a manner seldom equalled. But to Xavier was entrusted the organisation and application alike of resources and workers, and the manner in which he discharged the trust is the complete justification of his renown. He was not the founder of Roman Catholic Missions to India, but his was the genius and the personal devotedness which laid down the lines, on which throughout the whole East the missions of that Church were for long years to run. And his too in no small measure, was the influence which maintained the intensity of the missionary fervour which now glowed in the heart of the Church in Europe. With a lesser personality at the head of the operations in India, it is far from likely that the zeal of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the West would have continued to develop as it did. But in Xavier the missionary cause had as its leader and representative the man who stood next in reputation to Ignatius Loyola himself, and one who in social influence, personal character, and contagious enthusiasm was second to no churchman of his day. For Indian Missions this was a great gain.

As an originator of practical missionary methods

Xavier's legacy to future times must be admitted to be small. Over most of his own practice there rests the blight of a faulty theology, with its exaggerated views of the efficacy of the Sacraments. But there are at least two points in missionary strategy, where Xavier emphasised lines of action which missions of all the Churches are now agreed in following. In his anxious and successful endeavours to train up a large body of qualified native workers, ordained and lay, he was at one with the most modern of missionary experts. And when he urged, with unceasing and ever-increasing emphasis, the need of caring for the young of the Christian community, there too he was a modern of the moderns. "Believe me," he wrote to a brother worker, "trust my experience, all our ministry to this nation reduces itself to two capital points,—the baptism of children, *and their instruction as soon as they are capable of it.*" "Build schools in every village," he wrote to another, "that the children may be taught daily." In accordance with this counsel he sought more and more to shape the course of the missions under his charge, and, so far at least as concerns the instruction of the young, all missions to-day approve his judgment.

It is however when we pass from all critical weighing of the work of Xavier, and face the man himself that admiration and appreciation rise highest. Blot out the errors and the faults which were



inevitable consequences of his training and his creed. Forget these, and look at the man. He is well worth looking at, for never has India drawn to her shores a missionary more earnest or a soul more devoted. From the first hour when he received the call to work in India to the hour when he drew his last breath on Sancian's bleak shore, he was a man of one thought and one prayer,—the thought how best to do the work, the prayer that God's blessing might rest upon it to the saving of the souls of men. In that holy cause sufferings were not merely unheeded; they were welcomed. "Yet more, O my God, yet more!" was his impassioned prayer at the beginning of his career, when the trials it would entail rose up in vision before him, and when the "more" came he never flinched. Equally thorough was his devotedness to his work. Europe with its many attractions had no power to charm him when once he had said farewell. In all his correspondence not one word tells of longing for the old fellowship, or regret for the loss of the rich cultured life which he had forsaken. His gift of himself to India and the East was without repentance. Nay, it grew in fulness and intensity the longer that he lived, as was shown by the eagerness with which the giver pushed on and ever on to lands remote, that he might bear to men the tidings and the healing of the Cross.

Enthusiasm so intense rarely fails to win men's admiration, and it has not failed in the case of

Xavier. How his contemporaries thought of him, who were in daily contact with him, may be gathered from the following warm tribute written by Father Melchior Gonzalez from Goa in 1548:—

“He is so filled with the love of our Lord, so bathed in that love, that it seems as if nothing outside that love could touch him. He is not old, and his health appears good, although his mortifications are great. There is one detail I have noticed, and that is that he drinks no sort of wine. Privations are nothing to him. He forgets them all—this valiant soldier of Jesus Christ, that he may be occupied only with his King. We may say of him in the words of St. Bernard, ‘*Fidelis miles vulnera sua non sentit, dum benigne sui Regis vulnera intuetur*’. In truth, beloved brothers, we have amongst us a living martyr, and I am assured that he will soon die a martyr, for it seems that this is all his desire. How often already have arrows been darted against him, how often has the house where he was spending the night been set on fire! The attempt has been repeated three or four times in a single night. You may guess from this what sleep he had, and what repose he would be likely to find. He is a true soldier of Jesus Christ. This is the title that fits him perfectly.”<sup>1</sup>

The admiration he won from men of his own day has passed on undiminished to later generations. From them he has received more than admiration: he has been accorded a warm loving appreciation which many enthusiasts never know. Loyola exhibited a devotedness which was in nothing behind that of Xavier, but while he has gained thereby men's respect and honour, he has never won their affection. Loyola was the Calvin of the Jesuit

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, in his *Carey Lecture*, 1911.

Order, able and earnest but stern and austere: Xavier was its Luther, earnest, able, and zealous, but also loving and sympathetic to a degree that won men's hearts to himself, and through him to the cause he served. His letters tell this in part, and they are supplemented by the tales and legends of his life which have come floating down the centuries. It mattered not what the company was in which he mingled. While he was always the missionary, he was also the genial friendly brother man, charming those whom he met by his constant courtesy, his ready sympathy, and his unfeigned interest in their welfare. There is a story that tells how once when his humble converts in South India were attacked by a hostile band, Xavier with cross uplifted charged the enemy at the head of his timid followers and changed the attack into a rout. That story speaks for his Christian chivalry and courage. And the deep concern he felt for the sins of men is illustrated by the means he took, on one occasion, to bring to a true sense of his sins a fellow-Portuguese whom he saw going steadily to ruin. Counsel and remonstrance were thrown away, so Xavier, we are told, one day in the libertine's presence stripped himself to the waist, and chastised his own body so severely that the blood flowed freely. "It is for your sake," he cried to the startled sinner. "It is for your sake I do this: and it is not to be compared with what Jesus Christ has done for you. Will not His passion, His death, His

blood, soften your hard heart?" The method may be open to criticism, but not the heart that prompted it. That heart was ever true to men, and felt keenly for their needs.

What was better, it was true to Christ. For however much his Church was to Xavier, Christ was more, and as the years passed the supremacy of Christ increased, reaching its culmination in Japan. It is of this spiritual crisis that he wrote to Loyola, in the very year of his death, some words that are strongly evangelical:—

"I can never tell in writing, how much I owe to the Japanese, since through their means it was that God pierced my mind with a clear conviction of my many many sins. Up to that time my thoughts ever wandered away from myself. I had not searched into the pit of evil lying deep within me, but amid the troubles and anguish of Japan, my eyes were opened, and the good Lord granted me to see clearly."

Over a confession like this, the most ardent Protestant can clasp hands with the equally ardent missionary of Rome. In Christ divisions are not. All who love Him are one in Him. And surely it must have been from this same period in Xavier's life, that dates the beautiful hymn which, bearing his name, finds a welcome place in our books of Praise:—

"My God, I love Thee: not because  
I hope for heaven thereby,  
Nor yet because who love Thee not  
Are lost eternally.

“Thou, O my Jesus, Thou didst me  
    Upon the Cross embrace ;  
For me didst bear the nails, the spear  
    And manifold disgrace,

“And griefs and torments numberless,  
    And sweat of agony,—  
Yea death itself : and all for me,  
    Who was Thine enemy.

“Then why, O blessed Jesu Christ,  
    Should I not love Thee well ?  
Not for the sake of winning heaven  
    Nor of escaping hell !

“Not from the hope of gaining aught,  
    Not seeking a reward :  
But as Thyself hast loved me,  
    O ever loving Lord !

“So would I love Thee, dearest Lord,  
    And in Thy praise will sing :  
Solely because Thou art my God,  
    And my most loving King.”

This is Francis Xavier at his best. As such let succeeding generations ever think of him ; and so thinking give God thanks for the memory of his servant, the Apostle of the Indies, Rome's greatest missionary to the East.

## CHAPTER V

ALEIXO DE MENEZES, ARCHBISHOP OF GOA

(1559-1605)

IN regard to the central points of interest there is a striking difference between the history of Christianity in India and its history in Europe. In the Western world the record is largely occupied with details of the struggles of Christian sects, the contests—sometimes to the death—of Christian Churches, and the contrasted teachings of Christian theologians. From the history of Indian Christianity, these features are notably absent. There the narrative deals with the advances made by many of the Western Churches against a common foe, and their services in a common cause. The vastness of the field, the isolation in time, as well as in geographical distance, of many of the attacking forces from each other, and the acknowledged loyalty of all to the one Lord Jesus Christ, have tended in India to emphasise the inner unity of the Church, and to obscure or minimize those divisive tendencies which European history has unhappily accentuated. Rivalries there have no doubt been ever since Christians of various Churches went to the East, but in the general development of Indian Christianity

they do not bulk large. It is quite probable that as time passes, and the Indian Church emerges from the initial stage in which it even yet continues, the experiences of European Christianity will find an Indian parallel. But, with one notable exception, this has not yet happened. It is with the exception that this chapter deals,—the ecclesiastical struggle which took place at the close of the sixteenth century, between the Church of Rome and the Syrian Church of Malabar.

## I.

Some reference has already been made to the origin and growth of this Syrian Church. We have seen how for a thousand years the Christians of Malabar had been cared for by the Nestorian Church of Persia, and had acknowledged as their spiritual head the Nestorian Patriarch of Babylon. Later chapters have recorded the advent in India of sons of the great Latin Church, men loyal to Rome and eager to extend her sway over the non-Christian peoples of the East. East and West were thus brought face to face; and the meeting of the two branches of Christ's Church in a remote south-west corner of India, which is in itself full of interest, is rendered yet more interesting by the fact that, until they actually met, the two Churches were almost ignorant of each other's existence. Rome indeed had a shadowy consciousness that somewhere in South India Christianity had obtained a footing,

but of the actual Syrian Church of Malabar she knew almost nothing: and when Vasco da Gama and his Portuguese landed at Calicut it was one of their greatest surprises to discover in that remote corner an isolated but numerous and well-organised Christian Church. The Syrians were even more ignorant of Rome than Rome was of them. Of the existence of the Western Church and its distinctive ways they were quite oblivious, and to them it was a great surprise to find that these fair strangers from over the sea were Christians like themselves.

At first, on both sides the cordiality was extreme. The points of agreement were numerous and apparent, and the bond of Christian brotherhood was with gladness mutually acknowledged. But ere long, as the Portuguese got better acquainted with their new-found brethren, it became evident that many of their ways were not the ways of Rome. To Rome this meant then, what it means still wherever such divergence is revealed,—that these ways were wrong ways; for Rome can never err. And it meant further, that it was Rome's duty to bring into the right path those erring Christians to whose land the providence of God had now led his Church. So it came about that, in addition to the great work of converting the heathen, Rome found that India supplied her with the even more pressing and congenial task of bringing over a schismatic Church to the true faith and fold. From the first her Indian missionaries had recognised this work as



one that lay straight in their path. Xavier himself had emphasised it. To his credit be it said he did not turn aside from his own direct missionary labours to become a mere propagandist of Rome, but he urged on the home authorities the necessity for this being accomplished. Yet the task was not one that could be taken up with energy just at first, nor was it a work where Rome could employ her favourite weapon of coercion. Political considerations compelled her to walk warily. Those Syrian Christians, occupying as they did the *hinterland* of the coast from Calicut to Quilon, were the subjects not of Portugal but of a multiplicity of native Rajahs and minor rulers, whose alliance and goodwill Portugal, for commercial and political reasons, could not afford to lose. Nor were the Christians a feeble despised body who could be easily terrorised. Their numbers approximated 200,000, and they occupied a good standing in the country, ranking equal to the Nair caste. In many matters the local Rajahs had granted them virtual independence, holding their chief ecclesiastical authority, the bishop or *Metran* as he was called, responsible for the loyalty and civil obedience of his co-religionists. Only in criminal matters did the secular authority intervene. Clearly the "mailed fist" of Rome was impossible here : at least it would need to be covered with the velvet glove. Slower and more politic methods were called for than Rome had frequently used elsewhere,—and they were supplied, with

more successful results than would have attended measures of a harsher kind.

Prior however to detailing the methods employed, something must be said as to the religious beliefs and practices of those Syrian Christians, which in the eyes of Rome were such as to demand her interference and correction. On these matters the only authorities now existing are of Roman Catholic origin, which is a grave disadvantage, as one would have greatly liked to hear the Syrian presentment of their own case. Yet the presentment from Roman sources possesses one advantage; it cannot be suspected of any pro-Syrian bias. This adds significance to the fact, that the account thus given is nevertheless one that has always gained for the Syrians the sympathies of the Reformed Churches of Europe. With the moral life of the people very little fault is found, beyond indications that they were prone to occasional lapses into the superstitious practices of the surrounding heathen. But as regards the common moralities of daily life, the accounts supplied of the Syrian community compare very favourably with the records which the same Roman authorities have left of the scandalous life of the Portuguese residents in India. Not assuredly on account of defective morality did Rome seek to win over the Syrians of Malabar, but solely because of what was held to be their defective theology and irregular Church practice and government. Yet many of these so-called "defects" are regarded by Protes-

tants as being greatly to the credit of this remote fragment of Christendom, and are viewed as conclusive evidence that the Church concerned must have branched off from the main stem at a time before Roman errors had begun to appear in the Church of Christ.

Among the features which especially shocked Roman ideas were the following: The Syrians denied the doctrine of Transubstantiation and held a view of the Lord's Supper similar, as the Roman Catholic official historian (Gouvea) complains, "to that of the heretics of our time," i.e. the Protestants. The spiritual presence of Christ in the Sacrament they thankfully acknowledged, but the Roman corruption of that doctrine filled them with abhorrence. A further offence was found in their practice of administering the Sacrament to the laity in both kinds, the *Cattamar* or priest dipping the bread in the chalice before giving to the communicant. From Mariolatry or the cult of the Virgin they were entirely free. The Worship of Images, or the use of images in worship, they regarded as idolatry. Of Purgatory they had never heard. Of the Intercession of the Saints and of the practice of Prayer for the Dead they were equally ignorant. They were horrified at the idea of making auricular Confession a necessary preliminary to the Holy Communion. Only three sacraments were recognised by them, not seven as in the Roman Church—Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Ordination. The rite of Confirmation

was quite unknown. Their priests or Cattanars were married, their wives or Cattaniares taking precedence of the other women of the community, and being distinguished by a cross of gold or other metal suspended from the neck.

All these features were grievous errors in the eyes of the Roman priests, and there were numerous other minor defects in Church order which offended. But the most heinous error of all was that the Syrians recognised as their spiritual head not the Pope of Rome, but the Patriarch of Babylon. From that schismatic source their Church drew its spiritual nourishment. From that heretical dignitary their Bishop or Metran, whose seat was at Angamalé received his ordination and authority to rule. This was the crowning offence : if only it could be removed, and the hateful, and as Rome thought sinful, connection be broken off, the way to complete reform would be clear and the task not impossible. But this connection with the old Persian Patriarchate was the very feature in the life of their Church of which the Syrians were most proud. They gloried in the antiquity of the tie, and in its continuity through so many centuries. And, though they could not claim to be deep theologians, yet the conservative habit of mind, which is nowhere stronger than in India, attached them just as firmly to the system and doctrines which had come down to them from their forefathers. This strong adherence of the people to the old faith and the old government, coupled with the impossibility

of adopting harsh measures of coercion, made Rome's task one of great difficulty. Yet it was accomplished : and though the manner in which it was done says little for Rome's principles, the fact that done it was says much for her determined perseverance.

## II.

In the process of assimilation and conquest there were three stages, each stage being marked by a change in policy. The *First Stage* will be generally pronounced the most honourable of the three, and indeed it is the only one really entitled to be so described. In Rome's judgment the Syrian errors were largely due to ignorance, and conscientiously enough it was thought that if only her own more excellent way could be made known to the people, they would readily adopt it. So to secure this, in 1545 a college was established by the Franciscans at Cranganore, for the education and training of Syrian youths for the priesthood, according to the manner of Rome. An able and devoted Franciscan, Father Vincenz, was placed at its head, "a great servant of God," who on the recommendation of Xavier received for his work some pecuniary help from the King of Portugal. But when the training was completed, and the first company of Romanised young men were sent forth to charm their fellow-countrymen, these refused to be charmed. They declined even to listen to the charmers' wooing, and shut the doors of their churches against them. They would have none of

their new-fangled ways, and least of all would they have the services of the Church rendered in Latin in place of their own sacred language—Syriac, to which even though they understood it not, they and their fathers had listened for a thousand years.

With the failure of the Franciscans came the opportunity of their rival Order, the Jesuits. The Franciscans had tried to Westernise as well as Romanise, hence their failure. Besides discarding the use of Syriac they had enforced on the young priests the Roman dress. At their college at Vaicotta, three miles distant from Cranganore, which they built in 1587, the Jesuits avoided both mistakes. The Syriac language was taught and retained for the services of the Church, and when the young men were ordained they were sent out to work among their countrymen, garbed in the national dress of the *Cattanars*, as the Syrian clergy were termed. But the result was rather more disappointing than before. Not only did the churches remain closed against their protégées, but these protégées themselves argued with their teachers in favour of the Syrian usage, and persisted in praying publicly for the Patriarch of Babylon, who was to Rome anathema! It was a double failure, and very reluctantly this legitimate method of gaining the people by convincing them, after a fair trial of thirty years, had to be abandoned.

The *Second Stage* was as dishonourable as the first was honourable,—at least according to modern

Christian standards. Yet there can be no question of the originality of the method now adopted, for it consisted in kidnapping the Syrian Bishop or Metran! He was the living link between the people and Babylon, the visible reminder to the whole Church of its allegiance to that seat of schism, the fostering influence of its heretical doctrines in the minds and teaching of the Cattanars. Let him be removed, and it was thought people, Church and Cattanars would prove more amenable to reason. Best of all would it be if the Metran himself, once kidnapped and suitably dealt with, could be converted to Roman principles and ways, and then sent back to his people to conduct them into the fold. It was a bold, unscrupulous plan, and it received a prolonged trial. Not one Metran alone, but several in succession were thus dealt with, and the only mitigation of the pity, which we instinctively give to men so shamefully treated, comes from acquaintance with their unworthy bearing when under trial.

Mar Joseph ("*Mar*," Syriac for "Lord," being the honourable title prefixed to the name of all Metrans) was the first on whom the method was tried, and as he had shown himself to be friendly to the Roman priests at Cochin the auspices were not unfavourable. In 1556, on the ground of having cautioned some Portuguese youths in his employment against calling the Virgin Mary the "Mother of God," seeing she was only the "Mother of Christ," he was arrested at Cochin, where the

presence of Portuguese troops made such lawless action possible, and was conveyed to Goa for trial. Thence he was promptly dispatched to Portugal, with the request that the authorities there would send him on to Rome, to be dealt with by the Pope. But Mar Joseph proved so open to persuasion that he did not require to journey farther than Portugal. There he speedily found favour with the Queen Regent and others high in power, confessed his errors, and pledged himself to reform his Church, and bring it under the beneficent rule of Rome. With this promise, he was permitted to return to India, and, sorely against the wishes of the authorities at Goa, to resume his office in Malabar. They mistrusted his facile repentance, and with good reason, for hardly was his foot upon his native heath, and he himself beyond the jurisdiction of Portugal, than he did as aforetime and bade Rome defiance. But again, in 1567, he was craftily seized and this time was conveyed to Rome, under a charge of heresy: there he died—how, no man knoweth.

A like policy was followed with Mar Abraham, a prelate who had been sent from Babylon to take the place of Mar Joseph on the latter's first deportation. On Mar Joseph's return to his diocese there was friction and rivalry for a time between the two Metrans, and the returned semi-Roman did not scruple, for his own ends, to denounce his rival to the Archbishop at Goa, for intrusion and grave



heresy. The consequence was the apprehension of Mar Abraham, in December, 1557, and his subsequent deportation to Rome. At Mozambique, on the voyage to Europe, the captive Metran escaped, and made his way to Mosul, then the seat of the Patriarch of Babylon. From him he received fresh credentials to his See, as the unquestionable Metran of Angamalé, and then proceeded to take a step which argues either total ignorance of the ways of Rome or a personal lack of any conviction in things ecclesiastical. On his own initiative he proceeded to Rome—there to request and secure the Pope's sanction to his return to his Malabar bishopric. And the sanction was given—at a price. Mar Abraham accepted the whole of Rome's theology, anathematised his ancient creed, renounced allegiance to the Patriarch of Babylon, submitted to reordination, and departed for Malabar as Bishop of Angamalé, pledged to bring his people under the Papal sway. But once safely there, he too did as aforetime, and proclaimed himself a Syrian of the Syrians, teaching the doctrines he had at Rome forsworn, and leading the prayers of his people for the Patriarch of Babylon whom at Rome he had disowned. Clearly no headway could be made with Metrans of this flexible type, men who at Rome did as the Romans, but who, once secure in the mountains of Malabar, retracted every promise they had made. Mar Abraham was particularly elusive in the keeping of his promises. In 1579,

under a pledge of safe conduct, he attended a council at Goa and there anew abjured Babylon and accepted Rome. Yet on his safe return to his diocese he wrote to the Patriarch at Mosul explaining how fear of the Portuguese had constrained him to visit Goa, but that when there he had witnessed bravely for the creed of the Chaldæan Church. That this was really where his sympathies lay, he proved by requesting some years later that the Patriarch would send him an assistant-Bishop, who would ultimately succeed him in the See. Mar Simeon was the Bishop sent, and his arrival proved once again Rome's opportunity. The Metrans, old and young, developed into rivals, and at the instigation of the older man, in 1586, his younger rival was induced by stratagem to embark on a Portuguese ship which carried him to Lisbon. From thence he was taken to Rome, was tried by Pope Sixtus V., endured the humiliation of having his orders denied, and was compelled to anathematise his former errors. In 1594 a prison in Portugal received him, where he was placed under charge of the Archbishop-elect of Goa, Dom Aleixo de Menezes, and ultimately the unfortunate Metran is supposed to have died in Lisbon at the hands of the Inquisition.

The absence from Malabar of Mar Simeon freed Mar Abraham from the necessity of further courting the favour of the Roman authorities at Goa, and a final reversion to the Church of his early days,

and without doubt the Church of the old Metran's heart, took place. It was in vain that in 1590 the Goa authorities sought to secure his attendance at a Provincial Council held there. Using a native proverb, like our own "Once bit, twice shy," he politely declined the invitation, saying, "The cat that has once been bitten by a snake, is frightened by a cord". Seven years later, in January, 1597, the end came to this life of many turnings, and the Metran died with his face firmly set toward Babylon. Two Jesuits from Vaipicotta, on hearing of his condition hastened to offer him the last rites of the Church, but he declined them, and closed his earthly career a Syrian of the Syrians. In his own church at Angamalé, built by himself and dedicated to Abbé Hormisdas, a famous Nestorian, he was laid to rest—the last Metran of the undivided Syrian Church of Malabar. With his death came Rome's greatest opportunity, and the opening of the *Third Stage* in the conquest of this ancient Church; and with the hour there came also the man, *Dom Aleixo de Menezes, Archbishop of Goa*.

### III.

De Menezes at this time was a man of thirty-eight years of age, in the very prime of life and devoted to the interests of his Church. A brilliant career as a scholar and preacher at Lisbon had led to his appointment as Court preacher at Madrid under Philip II., and this in 1595 was followed by

his selection for the important post of Archbishop of Goa. Tidings of Mar Abraham's apostasy had reached Rome long ere this, and the special task assigned by the Pope to the new Archbishop was the subjugation of this persistently schismatic Church of Malabar. A papal brief, dated 27th January, 1595, authorised him to inquire into the errors of Mar Abraham, to arrest him if found guilty, to appoint one of the Roman communion to the See of Angamalé thus vacated,—and, in the event of Mar Abraham's death, to take every precaution to prevent any Bishop from Babylon setting foot on the shore of Malabar. Eager to carry out the papal instructions the crusading Archbishop landed at Goa, but Mar Abraham he found to be beyond his reach. At Angamalé the old Metran lived in security, for there neither papal brief nor Portuguese writ had any currency. So for two years Menezes had to bide his time, and only with Mar Abraham's death did his active crusade begin. It was known at Goa that in anticipation of the old Metran's death a request had already gone to the Patriarch of Babylon that he should consecrate a Bishop and send him to Malabar. So prompt measures were taken to render this request futile. Portuguese ships controlled the sea, and stringent orders were issued to all commanders to watch carefully the various ports whence the expected Bishop might sail, as well as those at which he might be likely to arrive. The blockade was

effectual. More than one Bishop-designate tried to run it, but in succession they were captured and sent back to their own land. The See of Angamalé remained vacant, and Menezes was free to try conclusions with the *interim* head of the Syrians, Archdeacon George.

His first step was extremely politic. It was to send to the Archdeacon a letter-patent appointing him *interim* ruler of the diocese, but on condition that he signed an accompanying profession of the Roman faith. This amazingly cool assumption of authority over a Church that was independent of his rule was too cool for the Syrians, and the whole country of the Serra (the mountainous part of Malabar, where the Syrians chiefly lived) was thrown into a blaze. The Archdeacon indignantly declined to give any countenance either to the document or to its Roman author. "I am sure," he said, "that the Roman Church has no more to do with the Apostolic Church of St. Thomas, than that Apostle had to do with the Church of Rome." To Angamalé a Synod of the Cattanars and leading laymen of the Church was summoned, and with one voice they supported the Archdeacon, taking solemn oath that they would stand by their ancient faith and practice, and would have no Bishop save one appointed by the Patriarch of Babylon. Nothing could have been more promising for the defence of the liberties of the Syrian Church. It was in truth a "signing of the Covenant" that, in intention, is

comparable to the more famous Covenant signed forty years later at Greyfriars in Edinburgh, in defence of another Church whose national liberties were similarly threatened. Alas, that in the keeping of their Covenant the men of the East showed so little of the tenacity of those of the West.

When Menezes learned of the commotion he was troubled but not dismayed, and calmly decided to visit in person the scene of the revolt. It was the resolution of a fearless man, taken in spite of much contrary advice from those who knew the country and the danger incurred in going unprotected among an excited people, and that Menezes persisted throws a strong light on his force of character. It explains, too, much of the remarkable success which accompanied his memorable and epoch-making visit.

Leaving Goa in January, 1599, the Archbishop proceeded to Cochin, where he was met in conference by Archdeacon George, who had come down from the mountains attended by a guard of 3000 armed men. All through the troubled months that followed, Archdeacon George claims our pity, though often not our sympathy. His was indeed a pitiful case. The responsible leader of a community that was still without a regular official head, the chief representative of a Church whose Metrans had again and again, under compulsion, denied its principles, and with each denial had weakened its independence and lessened its self-respect, he was called to face

the ever-advancing power and claims of Rome, and to deal directly with one of the ablest ecclesiastics ever sent by Rome to India. Timidity, vacillation and apprehensive dread marked the Archdeacon's actions from the first: the very size of the body-guard, with which he felt it necessary to surround himself when meeting Menezes, revealing his inner fear of coming issues. For Menezes the armed three thousand had no terrors, and before the two men separated, Rome had won the first battle: for the Archdeacon had been induced to sign a document which excommunicated the Patriarch of Babylon, forbade the mention of his name in the prayers of the Church, and asserted that the sole right to the title "Universal Pastor" belonged to the Roman Pontiff. At the last moment the Archdeacon hesitated, but a stern word from Menezes decided him; "Sign it, Father, for it is full time to lay the axe at the root of the tree". Bewildered and overcome by the stronger nature, he signed. When his followers learned what their leader had done they were greatly enraged, but quietened down when he made the sorry excuse that there was a time for everything, and this was a time for dissimulation, adding that he had yielded so as to preserve peace until the expected Bishop from Babylon should arrive.

The excuse was as dishonourable as was the surrender it sought to cover, and when we learn that soon after a further agreement was come

to between the Archbishop and the Archdeacon, that a Synod should be held at an early date, thoroughly representative of the Syrian Church, to determine concerning matters of Faith and Order, we know beforehand what the determination is likely to be. But Menezes left nothing to chance ; nowhere indeed are the ability and the unscrupulousness of this ecclesiastic more clearly shown than in his prearrangements for this momentous Synod. Some months had to elapse before the Synod could assemble, and according to the agreement come to between him and the Archdeacon, he was free during the interval to visit any of the churches in the diocese and to preach in them, *but not to confirm or to ordain*. The permission was freely utilised, the prohibition as freely disregarded, and throughout these precious months of opportunity the Archbishop became a keen and indefatigable proselytiser. Up and down the country he went, preaching in the Syrian churches and conciliating the Cattanars and people by every means he could devise, stooping even at times to bribery. Wherever a few young people could be gathered together and were willing to accept Confirmation, he administered that rite, utterly alien as it was to the Syrian Church. More calculating still was his holding three Ordination services, and ordaining some ninety young Cattanars. This was a flagrant breach of his solemn promise, but it secured a majority of Cattanars at the coming Synod,



pledged to support the Archbishop who had ordained them. From his residence at Angamalé the Archdeacon noted these ominous doings with dismay, and with every fresh instance of Syrian defection, his misgivings as to his own future grew more grave. Submission to the masterful Archbishop or deportation to Rome seemed the only two alternatives that remained open to him, and at last the much-tried, sorely-harassed Syrian decided that he must yield. It was the moment for which Menezes had been waiting, and he pressed his victory remorselessly home. Ten Articles were submitted to Archdeacon George for his signature and solemn oath of acceptance within twenty days. The Articles are of importance, for they indicate the main points on which Menezes thought it right to coerce this ancient Church. They may be thus summarised :—

1. Abjuration of the errors of Nestorius, Diodorus and Theodorus.
2. A declaration that there is no separate Doctrine of St. Thomas and Doctrine of St. Peter, but only the one Gospel of Christ.
3. Acceptance of the Confession of Faith which the Archbishop had sent from Goa, after the death of Mar Abraham.
4. All Syrian books in the diocese, the property of himself and previous Metrans, to be delivered up, for correction of errors : or, where deemed right, for burning.

5. Acknowledgment of the Pope as the head of the whole Church of Christ.
6. The Patriarch of Babylon to be anathematised, and all intercourse with him by letter or otherwise to cease.
7. No Bishop to be admitted into the diocese save one sent by the Pope, and recognised by the Archbishop of Goa.
8. Recognition of the Archbishop of Goa as his ecclesiastical superior.
9. Letters to be circulated throughout the diocese calling a Synod in order to treat upon matters of the faith,—the Synod to be attended by all Cattanars, and by chosen lay representatives from every congregation, and the decrees of the Synod to be binding on the Archdeacon.
10. That the Archdeacon, without any armed body-guard, should accompany the Archbishop on a tour through the Diocese.

It was a bitter cup of humiliation, but the unhappy Archdeacon drank it to the dregs. At the lodgings of the Archbishop at Vaipicotta his personal surrender of everything he held dear took place. There, kneeling before a Crucifix, he placed his hand on the Sacred Missal and swore to the ten Articles and made the required profession of his faith.

With the submission of the Syrian leader the final step preparatory to the great gathering was

accomplished, and at *Diamper* or *Udiamperur*, a few miles south-east of Cochin, on 20th June, 1599, the Synod met which was to mark the supreme tragedy of the ancient Church's story. Both Archdeacon and Archbishop had issued circulars convening the Synod. The circular of the Archdeacon has unfortunately not survived, but that of the Archbishop has been carefully preserved. It is a valuable document, for it gives from Menezes himself a clear statement of the reasons by which Rome justified her previous course, and the aims with which she was imbued.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV.

The Synod of Diamper was composed of 813 members, of whom 133 were priests or Cattanars, 20 were deacons, and 660 were laymen, the chosen procurators of the people. It was a thoroughly representative gathering. Let every allowance be made for the presence of the special protégées of Menezes, yet the total number present was far too great for the Synod to be described as a mere Roman clique. It was fairly representative of the Church which for a millennium had maintained its independence. Yet so careful and complete had been Menezes' preparations, that when he submitted a series of decrees which amounted to a condemnation of all that was distinctive in that Church's past, these decrees were unanimously adopted by the assembled Synod.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix III.

Prior to the opening of the Synod the Archbishop had made things very sure. Coming to Diamper eleven days before, and bringing with him the carefully prepared decrees, he had called together a select committee of eight popular Cattanars, four lay procurators, and six of his own Jesuit entourage, and had submitted to them the decrees he proposed. They were voluminous, able and exhaustive, filling in the large quarto edition, subsequently issued, 220 pages. Point by point at this private conference every decree was gone over, Menezes accepting minor alterations in matters pertaining to local usages, but standing adamant against any alteration in points of doctrine or Church order : and when the proposals came ultimately before the Synod they had behind them the approval of this presumably representative committee. Professedly the Synod met to discuss the decrees and frame them finally according to its united judgment : in reality it met to give official ratification to what had been already decided.

The meetings of the Synod lasted for eight crowded days, but the decisive sessions were those of the first and second days. On the first day it was agreed that no member of the Synod should be allowed to leave Diamper until all the meetings had concluded, and that no private conferences or sectional meetings should take place under pain of excommunication. The dangers of a cave or of a secession were thus precluded. But it was the second day that brought the only episode which at all ap-

proached a crisis. Robed in full pontificals, as the Legate of the Pope, the Archbishop first divested himself of his mitre and placed it upon the altar. Then, says the official record of the Synod,<sup>1</sup> "kneeling before the altar and having laid his hands upon a cross that was upon a book of the Gospels, he did in his own name, as the present Prelate and Metropolitan of the diocese, and in the name of all the Christians belonging to the same, and every person thereof, secular and ecclesiastic, make profession and oath of the faith following, which was immediately declared to all who were present". The faith thus professed was that authorised by the Council of Trent, but with some important additions directed against the heretical doctrines and practices which had hitherto characterised the Syrian Church of Malabar.

In silence the Synod listened, as clause after clause either acknowledged a doctrine they had not owned, or anathematised a practice to which they had been for centuries devoted: and when at last the recital ceased, a confused but unmistakable murmur of protest was raised. They needed no new confession of faith they declared. To adopt such would cast a shameful slur on their previous Christian beliefs and practices. The point of danger had been

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Journeys of Menezes in Malabar*, by Antonio Gouvea, an Augustinian Friar in Goa in the time of Menezes,—by whom the record must have been approved. It is the source of all later accounts.

reached, but Menezes was ready for it. No disowning, he declared to them, of their former Christian heritage was implied, but rather a reaffirming of it and a great enhancing. New circumstances ever and again called for a fresh declaration of the loyalty of Christian people to the ancient faith. Therefore did he, the Archbishop himself, gladly make this new profession,—therefore did their own Archdeacon do the same. And the cowed and broken Syrian leader did accordingly; he took the oath and was followed by the great majority of the Synod. Not however by all. One Cattanar of considerable social standing and some seventy of the members of the Synod moved towards the porch, and made angry protests. Their object was to break up the gathering before the Synod was definitely pledged, but on Menezes asking the cause of their complaint, they only demanded that if they submitted to the Pope and to the Portuguese Bishops, the King of Portugal would take them under his protection, and relieve them of certain dues hitherto exacted from them by the local Rajahs. To this request Menezes at once acceded and did so with picturesque and impressive accompaniment. Turning to Don Antonio, the Governor of Cochin, who was present at the Synod, he commended the Christians to his care and his protection, and the Governor made suitable response. Kneeling before the Archbishop he accepted the trust, and in the name of his Royal Master undertook the duty. The incipient rebellion was quelled.

Then, ever careful, the victorious ecclesiastic hastened to assure the native Rajah of Cochin that the Portuguese protection now promised extended only to ecclesiastical affairs, and did not trench in the slightest on the rights of the Rajah, as the lawful monarch of his Christian subjects.

With the surmounting of the crisis all hindrance ceased, and by the end of the eighth day the last of the voluminous decrees had been passed, and the Syrian Church of Malabar had become Syrian only in name. In all essentials of belief and practice it had taken on the garb of Rome, the only remaining link with the past being the continued use of the Syraic language in the services of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

From the point of view of Reformed Christendom the change thus effected was a lamentable falling away from that fuller truth and purer practice which, with admitted defects, the old Syrian Church had so wonderfully preserved. Never probably has a change of front so extreme been so quickly adopted by any other Church, and one cannot believe that the average member of the Synod realised at the time the enormity of the change he was approving. Only slowly when the words became translated into practices would their full meaning strike home. For the three sacraments hitherto known to them, the Syrians were now supplied with seven. In Baptism and in the cele-

<sup>1</sup> For Decrees in full, see *Hough*, vol. ii., Appendix.

bration of the Holy Communion the old words were discarded, and new forms of administration were introduced. Communion only in one kind was made imperative. Confirmation, hitherto unknown, was insisted on; and most hateful of all, prior to partaking of the Holy Sacrament the Confessional had to be entered. Worship of the Virgin, Prayer to the Saints, the use of Pictures and Images in the ordinary worship—all these accompaniments of Divine Service, previously not only unknown in the Syrian Church but when first seen abhorred, were now freely introduced. Upon the clergy Rome's fixed policy of celibacy was remorselessly imposed. Wives of Cattanars, who formerly were first among the women of the community, were now by decree of the Synod thrust aside as unclean things, and should a Cattanar refuse to impose this dishonour on his wife he was himself to be suspended from his office. But bitter though the working of this enactment was felt to be at the time, the most serious decree of all, in the eyes of many in later days, was that which practically annihilated the whole of the distinctive literature of this ancient Church. The Scriptures in current use were the Peschito version, with some interesting variations peculiar to the Nestorian Churches. Wherever there was variance from the Latin Vulgate the needed correction was now made. Syrian Breviaries and the Book of Common Prayer were purged from many heresies, one such specially



noted being that "in the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there is not the true body of Christ". All Syriac books were ordered to be given up by their possessors, to be dealt with by the official censor appointed by the prelate, to be by him corrected or destroyed. It was under this decree that the literary holocaust took place which, as the Syrian Christians of to-day believe, gave to the flames every record of their Church's past, from which it might have been possible to recover its history with much welcome detail. But that past was, to Menezes, far better forgotten, and his measures to secure oblivion proved only too effective. "The day of vandalism" is the description applied by Germann, the historian of *The Church of the Thomas Christians*, to the day when the destroying decree was passed, and the language is justified. Vandalism it was, fit to be pilloried alongside the act of Omar the Mohammedan vandal who gave to the flames the noble library of Alexandria—and without the vandal's excuse.

Yet some good points there were in the decrees which deserve to be noted, if only for the sake of slightly lessening the dark shadow flung on the Syrian Church by the Diamper Synod. Long contact with the life and ways of the surrounding heathenism had tainted the Syrian Christian life with divers superstitious practices. These were now forbidden. Timely baptism of infants was insisted upon, and the practice of delaying baptism,

sometimes for years, which was not uncommon, was severely censured. Provision was made for the due instruction of converts from heathenism, and the long-omitted duty of the Church in this matter was given some prominence. The Syrian Church had never been a missionary Church : indeed regard for its own social position had made it anti-missionary so far as concerned the mass of non-caste natives around. By their admission it was considered that the Church would be contaminated, and the old members would themselves lose caste : so conversion was not encouraged. Rome rightly changed this by declaring missions a duty : though she temporised here as elsewhere by providing separate churches and separate Cattanars for the non-caste converts when they came. And of advantage too was the change, enacted by the Synod, by which the diocese was divided into definite parishes and one Cattanar was appointed to the charge of each. That orderliness, organisation, and uniformity throughout the Church were enhanced by the decrees of the Synod is undoubted, but that the losses were far in excess of these mostly minor gains is no less certain.

The Synod closed, it is recorded, with the singing of the *Te Deum*. Verily, it must have been with sad hearts and breaking voices that many of those present took part ; but there can have been no break in the voice of Archbishop Menezes, for he celebrated that day the greatest victory his Church has ever won in India.

## V.

The Synod of Diamper was indeed Archbishop Menezes' "crowning mercy," yet he took no risks as to the sequel. Careful preparation had secured the success of the Synod's proceedings, and now equal precautions were taken to make certain the expected fruitage. None knew better than Menezes how possible it was for a reactionary movement to sweep over the Church he had annexed; and with a view to preventing any such uprising, no sooner had the Synod concluded than he entered on a tour of visitation through Rome's new territory. Centre after centre was visited and the path smoothed for the practical carrying out of the reforms decreed at Diamper. Here again the genius of the organiser was given full play, and for the most part his progress through the diocese resembled a triumphal procession. In full ecclesiastical robes he approached the various Christian villages, where he was received by young and old with the singing of prepared hymns of welcome, and the reverent kissing of the archiepiscopal hand, an act of homage which drew down the archiepiscopal blessing. Occasional opposition was firmly but temperately dealt with, difficulties were smoothed over, and a reputation for courtesy and generosity was carefully fostered. At one village, Callurcada, the tradition goes that cakes were distributed to the thronging children, and that hidden in each cake was found a

golden coin. Sure supporters of the Roman Archbishop would these children be. Everywhere Syrian usages were discarded and Roman ways adopted. The cult of the Blessed Virgin was sedulously fostered, images were given an honoured place in the churches, the Communion Feast became a Mass, communion tables of wood were replaced at the Archbishop's expense by stone altars, and with amazing completeness and acquiescence old things passed away and new things came in their stead. That an undercurrent of dissatisfaction prevailed in many quarters can hardly be doubted, yet only once did it seriously disturb the reforming Archbishop. This was at Pallur, the farthest north of all the Syrian centres, within the territory of the Zamorin of Calicut. There the Archbishop found a religious play being performed, greatly to the delight of the Christian population. In the drama three leading characters were represented as taking part, St. Thomas, St. Peter, and St. Syriac, who was the patron-saint of the local church; and, according to the account given of the matter by Gouvea (the official historian of the Diamper Synod), the topic of conversation was none other than the doings of the Roman Archbishop. St. Thomas reproaches St. Peter for the reprehensible acts of his client. "Your law," says St. Thomas, "was preached at Rome and in Italy. Your proceedings are therefore most unreasonable. You have brought into this country an Archbishop, a very enterprising

man, who by sheer violence has maintained the cause of the Portuguese, and introduced your law among a people who owe you no allegiance. Your successors, the Bishops of Rome, can have no authority whatever in the country, which is mine of old, made so through my preaching. We are both Apostles of Jesus Christ: our power is therefore so equal that you have no more jurisdiction over my Christians than I have over yours." St. Peter's reply is feeble. His law, he maintains, is for all the earth: and though that of St. Thomas is good, his is better. To end the dispute St. Syriac is called in, and without hesitation decides in favour of St. Thomas, "Because," said he, "the Christians of India do not depend on St. Peter, but on their true pastor the Patriarch of Babylon. The Portuguese Archbishop, who declares to the contrary, is a heretic, against whom it is necessary that the Indian Christians should be on their guard. They ought not to surrender their faith to him: and the oaths that he extorted at Diamper are manifestly null and void."

As may be supposed this ebullition of popular feeling found no favour with Menezes, and he promptly suppressed it, declaring the three performers to be possessed by the devil. Still the mere record of its happening is interesting, and suggests that the slumbering discontent may well have been greater than the Roman accounts of the period would lead us

to suppose. A Syrian record of the Synod and its sequel is greatly to be desired. Yet the outward results are undeniable. By persuasion, cajolery, browbeating, and other arts, the chains of Rome were riveted on the Syrian Church, and for the time those who wore the chains proclaimed them to be flowery garlands. When, in November 1599, Menezes embarked for Goa he was accompanied to the vessel by the Archdeacon and two Cattanars, while on the shore a multitude of Christians bewailed aloud the departure of one whom they described as their Father! their Teacher! their Metran! Their last request was that he should exchange his Archbishopric at Goa for that of Angamalé, and Menezes courteously assured them he would bring their request to the notice of the Roman Pontiff with whom the decision lay. Whether he had really any intention or desire to accede to their wishes is extremely doubtful, but that, on his departure from the country of the conquered Church, such a desire should be expressed by the people he had conquered was indisputable evidence of the greatness of his victory. He had been absent from Goa only ten and a half months, and in that brief period he had mastered the Church that had stood proudly independent for a thousand years, and had brought it a willing captive to the feet of Rome.

It was a remarkable achievement, and one would fain obtain some more intimate knowledge of the

strong man who wrought it, than is procurable from the official account of his campaign. The personal and human note is there too faintly expressed, and we long in vain for such self-revealings of Menezes, as are supplied in the case of Xavier by his frank and plentiful correspondence. Some slight approach to a revealing of the kind occurs in a manuscript volume in the British Museum, dated 1604, containing letters written by Jesuit missionaries on the Malabar Coast. One of the letters there preserved is from a Father Pimenta to the General of the Society of Jesus, which gives an interesting estimate of what the writer considers the magnificent work of Archbishop Menezes. As the following extract shows, political considerations were not absent in the campaign for the subjection of the Syrians to Rome, but most valuable of all Father Pimenta's contribution is a letter to himself from the Archbishop. This supplies a direct touch, of an unstudied kind, with the famous ecclesiastic, such as is seldom obtainable. Says Pimenta :—

“How important was the step (i.e. the Romanising of the Syrian Church) and how greatly in the future it was to promote the interests of the Portuguese Crown none can gainsay who is aware of the effect of binding this race, which from the days of St. Thomas had alone in India held the faith, and could place in array thirty thousand armed men to the cause of Portugal, and of bringing them under the obedience of the Roman See. What greatly helped in effecting this, were the zeal displayed and the exemplary life of this Prelate (Archbishop Menezes). He in the space of nine months did more, as our (Jesuit) Fathers attest, to promote the spiritual welfare of these people

than had been done from the Apostle's time to our days by those who have occupied that See. How well disposed this Prelate is towards ours, who labour in that section of the Lord's vineyard, is shown by what he writes in the following letter which he addressed to me :—

“ ‘The visitation through the Serra has often left me exhausted : but I keep in mind what the Holy Ghost has said, *Et bene patientes erunt ut annuntient* (Ps. xci. 15-16). In what state I was able to leave the affairs of these (Syrian) Christians, the (Jesuit) Fathers must have written you, so I say nothing. One thing I will say to your Reverence—had I spent the winter here in Goa, those churches would have been lost : nor would I have saved my conscience, at a time when the flock was mine, and was sadly in need of pastoral care and Catholic teaching, had I abandoned it and had I not rather fed it with healthful doctrine, as I did, and do, with the Fathers of the Society to accompany me. I beg and entreat your Reverence to realise how acceptable to me is the almost unbearable burden they sustain in cultivating and expanding the vineyard. The love, the charity, with which they endure all things for God's sake, has bound me by no slight ties to them, for without them I would have done nothing. Supported by them frequently I learned to throw off the clouds of troubles and anxieties, which weighed upon me, at times tepid and imperfect. May the Lord reward them in Heaven, and may your Reverence bestow upon them a copious blessing. The Residence of the Fathers at Angamalé has been opened with the approval of all. Let not your Reverence have any doubt. The entire salvation of these Christians depends upon the Residences in the Serra.’ ”<sup>1</sup>

He was no Xavier this Archbishop, but according to his lights a most zealous, faithful and able apostle of Rome.

With the subjugation of the Syrian Church Menezes' main work in India was accomplished. Goa claimed him a little longer as Viceroy of the

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, *Christianity in Travancore*, p. 70.



East, and in the double capacity of Archbishop and Viceroy he had the satisfaction, in 1601, of seeing his faithful Jesuit helper, Francisco Roz, installed as Bishop of Angamalé. A little later, in 1605, the higher rank of Archbishop of Cranganore was conferred on the same capable prelate, and the old bishopric of Angamalé vanished from history's page. Soon afterwards Menezes returned to Europe, where as befitted the hero of so great a victory further honours awaited him. Under Philip III. of Spain he was nominated Viceroy of Portugal, subsequently being made President of the Portuguese Council of State at the Court in Madrid. This was the climax in a great career, for after its attainment there ensued, it is recorded, a rapid fall, disgrace, and death. But neither by his achievements nor by his failures in Europe is Menezes remembered. He lives in history as the man who, in India, brought under the heel of Rome the Syrian Church of Malabar.

## VI.

It is not easy to account satisfactorily either for Menezes' marvellous success in dealing with the Syrians or for their utter collapse. One would gladly learn of any extenuating circumstances, which might lessen the ignominy of their abject surrender, and there are at least two considerations of this kind which in fairness to the Syrians deserve to be remembered. One springs from the relations of the native rulers to the Portuguese Power. Of these rulers the

Rajah of Cochin was perhaps the most important, and during the earlier years of the ecclesiastical struggle he quietly encouraged his Christian subjects to hold out against Rome's approaches. Of the rights and wrongs of the controversy he knew nothing and cared less, but he keenly realised that if these Christian subjects of his once came under Rome, they would necessarily be drawn into close relations with the Portuguese, and in any emergency would not then be so reliable defenders of his kingdom as they would be if they remained an independent Church. So he secretly encouraged them in resisting, and threw obstacles in the way of Menezes' agents. But Menezes knew his man. A bribe of 20,000 golden ducats or £9500, coupled with a warning hint of Portuguese chastisement, made the Rajah desist from interfering and give the Archbishop a free hand. Undeniably this abandonment of their cause by their civil ruler weakened the spirit of resistance on the part of the Syrians. Yet, one asks, why should it have done so? Had they stiffened themselves and held out, Menezes could have done no hurt either to their bodies or to their estate, for it is extremely improbable that the Rajah, though bribed to passive neutrality, would ever have consented to coerce his subjects to a course which linked them closer with the now dreaded Power of Portugal. Still the mere fact that their secular ruler had ceased to support them partly paralysed their resistance. And what must have added to the paralysis was the pitiable

conduct of their spiritual leaders. With leaders so time-serving, prevaricating and untruthful, as we have seen the Metrans and the Archdeacon to have been, the heroism of the community, if it was ever there, could not but be sapped. In the face of this double calamity, desertion by the civil authority and betrayal by the spiritual, the rank and file of the Church not unnaturally gave way.

Undoubtedly these are facts which may fairly be pleaded on behalf of the Syrians. But though they mitigate the severity of the verdict, they are far from securing an acquittal. In many parts of Europe, earlier in the same century, a like conflict took place between Rome and the Reformed Churches, and in some cases the circumstances were not dissimilar. Yet how different the issue! In Scotland, as in Malabar, the Reforming cause was not supported by the official leaders of the Church. For the most part these remained Roman and worked for Rome. Neither was the monarch favourable to Reform. Yet the people stood firm and Rome was overthrown. In Germany for the greater part it was also so. The spiritual chiefs, the Bishops, held fast to Rome and so did the great Emperor. But the German people were steadfast and Rome had to yield. In India it was otherwise. No Knox or Luther stood forth from the people, daring all for the sake of God and righteousness. Leaders failed and the people succumbed. One feels that the contrast points to the presence of some qualities in the peoples of Europe

which the Syrians did not possess : and it will hardly be denied that prominent among these missing qualities were the *grit of race* and *the power of religious conviction*. The grit of race has often been exemplified since first the European entered India and came into conflict with the less virile Hindu, but no example of its working has been more striking than that afforded by this victory of Menezes. It is a signal instance of the power of a masterful son of the West over a multitude of Orientals. But racial qualities alone do not wholly explain the victory. Behind these lay the force that comes from religious conviction. In other lands no force has done so much to beat back the advance of Rome as this force has done. But in this Indian conflict of three centuries ago it was Rome that possessed the force and not her opponents. Menezes had convictions, strong, deep, and steadfast. Rome was to him the one true Church, the one custodian and channel of divine grace. That was his faith. In that he lived and for that faith, had the need arisen, he would have bravely died. However much we may disapprove of his theology and condemn his methods, yet we recognise that in him we look upon *a man*, possessed of force, conviction, and devotedness to the highest that he knew. Against him we see a large community, where deep religious conviction appears to be almost unknown, but where in its stead there is found a strong traditional attachment to Babylon, and a conservative affection for the customs of their forefathers. Sadly

says Hough, the laborious, able and sympathetic historian of the Syrian struggle: "With regard to Christian principle in the contest they maintained all is blank," and the words he quotes from the letter of a friend, to whom he had submitted his manuscript, express only too truly the feelings of many another: "Can you get no scrap of history that discovers divine faith or Christian graces in the poor Syrian Churches? They had the Scriptures among them, and surely they were not like dead corpses all through their history. It is greatly to be regretted that the interior and spiritual history is absent and lost. Where is the faith, hope, and love of the Gospel?" Echo gives answer. If indeed one could forget that Rome's victory meant the blotting out of a purer creed and practice than her own, and that the victory was gained by most unworthy tactics, one could almost say that she deserved to win. Religion to her champion was a living force, while to the great mass of her opponents it was but an ancient custom.

So Menezes triumphed, and the effects of his triumph remain to this day. It is true that fifty years later, in 1653, when the Portuguese were driven from Malabar by the Dutch, the Syrians revolted from their Roman bondage and resumed connection with Chaldæan Christianity; but it is also true that more than half the community repented and were speedily regained by Rome, and that even those who remained apart retained many of the

Roman ways which they had learned to love in their half-century of captivity. To-day the community is 728,304 strong; and of these the latest census (1911) shows that while 315,162 may be classed as Syrians of the East, 413,142 are Syrians of Rome. So Menezes being dead yet speaketh. For good or ill his work abides, and his life stands out before India as a striking instance of what a strong man can do, in whose heart is a conviction of the truth and right of the cause for which he labours. And if ever the hope is to be realised, which many cherish for the Church he overthrew—that she will yet take the place in the Church of India which is hers by long priority of birth, and do the work for India which is hers by right of nationality,—it will only be by her own sons becoming filled with a religious conviction of the truth as strong as was that of their suppressor, and more pure, as becometh those who have received the fuller light. It is a hope much stimulated by recent developments in the spiritual life and Christian ideals of this most ancient of India's Churches. May God speed its fulfilment.

## CHAPTER VI.

ROBERT DE NOBILI, AND HIS SUCCESSORS

(1606-1741)

AMONG the many criticisms to which Indian Missions are subjected one is peculiarly constant. It is that which declares Christianity, as offered to India to-day, to be too Western in its aspect, ever to find acceptance with the Hindu. Only divest it, it is urged, of its European dress, admittedly not of vital moment and absent from its primitive form; retain its essence but let the accidents assume an Eastern hue; express its doctrines in language familiar to Eastern thought; allow its life to run into Eastern moulds and take on an Eastern shape;—do this, and much of the opposition at present experienced will disappear. Eastern prejudices will be conciliated, and Christianity will advance by leaps and bounds. The idea is fascinating, for the criticism is in no small measure true. How most wisely to respond to it is a living problem with well-nigh every mission in India; indeed there is scarce a mission whose records do not tell how some ardent and devoted member of its staff

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has at one time or another sought to solve it.<sup>1</sup> But on a large scale, the endeavour to present the Christian religion in an Orientalised form has only once been seriously attempted, and that was three hundred years ago, with amazing thoroughness, perseverance and sacrifice, by the Jesuit Mission of Madura, under the leadership of Robert de Nobilibus. It is with the methods, history and results of that most strange and memorable mission, that this chapter deals.

## I.

*Robert de Nobilibus*—or, more familiarly, Robert de Nobili—was an Italian of noble birth and high ecclesiastical connections. Pope Marcellus II. was his grand-uncle, the famous Cardinal Bellarmine was his uncle. He himself was born in Tuscany in 1577, and served his novitiate in the Society of Jesus at Naples, where scholarly ability and boundless zeal early marked him out for future greatness. In 1606 he proceeded to India, at a time when events had been happening that were calculated to stimulate the ardour of a young and ambitious member of his Order. Menezes' great victory over the Syrian Church had just been gained, resulting in the accession of 200,000 souls to the Church of Rome, and every Roman priest in the Eastern world when

<sup>1</sup> For one of the most recent endeavours see Robinson's *In the Brahman's Holy Land*.



he heard the tidings thanked God, and felt himself stimulated to more strenuous endeavour.

That victory, however, had been won over Christians. When de Nobili, on his arrival in India, looked for the achievements of his Church among the Hindus and over heathenism, he was faced with no similar inspiring spectacle. Since the days of Xavier more than fifty years had passed, and though throughout these years many missionaries had laboured in the field which was hallowed by memories of the great leader, their success had been but scanty. In one very important department success had been entirely wanting. No Brahmans had yet become Christians. The caste communities remained untouched. Only on one occasion had even Xavier ventured to attack a Brahman stronghold, and meeting then with failure he had never repeated the attempt. By his successors this experience of their grèat pioneer had been accepted as decisive, and such progress as they had made was confined to the lower and more degraded sections of the Indian people.

De Nobili's destination was Madura, and there he found himself compelled by his very environment to carefully reconsider the whole missionary problem. He was faced by many difficulties inevitably attendant on aggressive Christian work in a Hindu State, but of which Xavier had had no experience. Facts—even truths—in Hinduism, of which that saintly leader had been quite ignorant, were to de

Nobili too palpable to be denied, and strong forces in the social and religious life of the Hindu people, which were keenly antagonistic to Christianity, but which Xavier never had to encounter, were de Nobili's daily experience. Further, in all Xavier's Indian work, there had been behind the missionary the strong arm and the active support of the Portuguese authorities, but in Madura no extraneous aid or influence of the kind existed. The city was the capital of a powerful Hindu Kingdom, where not only was the prestige of Portugal unrecognised, but the very term "*Parangi*"—the common designation of a Portuguese or other European—was an epithet of disdain. This of itself suggested the need of some drastic modification in missionary strategy: and even more indicative of such necessity was the religious condition of the city. Madura was the centre of Hinduism for Southern India. Ten thousand Brahman students were there in residence, for the purpose of receiving instruction in the deep things of Hinduism. A whole army of teachers was there as well under whom, distributed in classes of from two to three hundred, the pupils studied for four or five years. Teachers and pupils alike were supported by liberal grants from the royal purse. Manifestly, if the Christian missionary was to make any headway here, something very different was required than the simple method of the hand-bell, which had been followed by Xavier among the humble and ignorant Paravans.

Two things especially impressed de Nobili : the grim power of Caste, and the need for wise and patient strategy if that fortress of Hinduism was to be captured for Christ. In his judgment no frontal attack offered any prospect of success. Writing at a later date to a young missionary who wished to follow just such a method, and to begin his work by "roaring against the pagodas," de Nobili put his own view very plainly :—

"To attack from the front would be to close all doors of access : not because these false idols are not worthy of all opprobrium, but for the sake of the salvation of souls. When we chase shadows from a room, we do not make a stir with a broom."

It seemed to him that the correctness of his judgment was amply proved by the failure of the previous Christian efforts which Madura had witnessed. Franciscan missionaries had worked there on the older lines for several years, and with very little success. On the arrival of the Jesuits, before de Nobili came on the scene, the Franciscans had evacuated the field, and a Jesuit missionary, Father Fernandez, had taken up their work, which consisted mainly in looking after some Christian Paravans, lowly folk who had come from Xavier's old field on the coast to live in Madura. But Fernandez' work had been no more progressive than that of the Franciscans. To the Brahmans of Madura all such work was as if it were not. It was simply beneath their notice,—as far beneath as were

the Paravans, whom it concerned. And how could it be otherwise, de Nobili asked, when one considered the workers and their methods? The missionaries were *Portuguese*! That alone was sufficient to condemn them and nullify their efforts, for by that time the Portuguese had become the best-hated people in India—not only by reason of their harsh acts and overbearing manners, but because every respectable Hindu despised them for what he deemed their filthy, impious ways. They drank wine! They ate cow's flesh! They companied with pariahs as readily as with men of caste! How could a religion, taught by men so despicable in their life, ever hope to be listened to, far less accepted?

So de Nobili formed his momentous resolution, fortifying himself with the example of our Lord who to save men became man, and that of St. Paul who was "all things to all men that he might save some". "I also," said this famous Jesuit, "will make myself Indian to save the Indians." He would become a Brahman to the Brahmans. Divested of every mark of the European he would approach them as one of themselves, and once having gained their confidence, would lead them to the true faith, and seal them to Christ with the holy rite of Baptism. It was a policy startling in its novelty, very dubious in its morality, and sure to be most difficult and hazardous in its execution. For it is in India one thing to become a Pariah to the Pariahs, as not a few

missionaries have done, but it is quite another thing to become a Brahman to the Brahmans, and that so completely that the disguise shall not be penetrated. It demanded the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the language, an intimate acquaintance with their sacred writings, and an easy familiarity with every detail of the ritual of their religious and their social life. But the difficulties in the way only served to stimulate de Nobili's zeal, and having obtained the sanction of the Archbishop of Goa, he entered on his great experiment.

## II.

The opening acts in his campaign were dramatically conceived and skilfully executed. Through Madura there ran one day a striking piece of news. It was told how a strange ascetic from some far land had arrived, drawn to the holy city by its great repute, and that he had taken up his abode in the Brahman quarter of the city. Hindus are as prone to curiosity as other people, and soon visitors flocked to the house of the holy man to see what they should see, but only to find that the Brahman's servants would not permit their entrance. "The Master," they said, "is meditating upon God. He may not be disturbed." This merely whetted the people's desire, and the fame of the recluse quickly grew, whereupon the privacy was relaxed, and daily audiences were granted to a privileged few.

Seated cross-legged on a settee the Sannyasi was

found by his visitors, conforming in everything to Brahman usage. Over his shoulder hung the sacred cord of Caste, only in his case it was a cord of five threads, three of gold to symbolise the Trinity, and two of silver representing the body and soul of our Lord, and from the cord was suspended a small cross. Conversation revealed the Sannyasi's learning, and observation and keen inquiry certified to his frugal and holy life. One meal a day, consisting of a little rice and milk and acrid vegetables, was all his food. Soon not only ordinary Brahmans came to see him, but nobles also : and a great bound in his reputation took place when on being invited to the palace by the King, the Sannyasi declined the invitation, lest on going forth the purity of his soul should be sullied by his eyes lighting upon a woman ! Never was a holier saint seen in Madura. Where the life bore such testimony to his holiness, how could his teaching be other than true ! His statement that he was a "Roman Brahman" of the highest caste was accepted, and to remove any possible doubts that might linger, an ancient discoloured parchment was produced which showed how the "Brahmans of Rome" had sprung direct from the god Brahma, and were the noblest born of all his issue. To the genuineness of this document the Sannyasi solemnly swore, and with open minds the people listened to his teaching.

Book after book was written by the able and daring writer, in which he grafted a modified

Christian doctrine on the Hindu stem. Most notable of all such efforts was the forging of a "Fifth Veda," to complete and crown the four Vedas received by Brahmans as direct revelations from heaven. It was an amazing piece of daring—as bold and hazardous as it would be for a Hindu to forge for Christian use a fifth gospel. Yet the forgery held its place for one hundred and fifty years!<sup>1</sup>

Brahman disciples were soon freely won; baptisms became fairly numerous, though the identity of the rite with the baptism administered by earlier European missionaries was disguised; and so far as outward tokens went, the new missionary method was proving a success. Without a doubt progress was greatly facilitated by the highly significant concessions that were made to Hinduism, especially in connection with Caste. According to de Nobili, caste had little religious signification. To him it was in the main a social observance, and so regarding it he saw no reason for compelling his converts to break with their caste fellowship or observances. Writing in 1609 he states his position:—

"By becoming a Christian, one does not renounce his caste, nobility, or usages. The idea that Christianity interferes with them has been impressed upon the people by the devil, and is

<sup>1</sup> As *L'Ezour Vedam* this work was introduced to the notice of Europe by Voltaire in 1761, as a lofty product of Hinduism. By some the authorship has been attributed to de Britto, but the probabilities are all in favour of the local tradition which ascribes it to de Nobili.

the great obstacle to Christianity. It is this that has stricken the work of Father Fernandez with sterility.”<sup>1</sup>

From no like cause did sterility threaten de Nobili's own work. His converts retained the *Kudumi* or tuft of hair which marked the caste Hindu, they wore a sacred cord indistinguishable from that of their Hindu neighbours, and they bore an oval caste mark on their brow, the paste composing it being made of the ashes of sandal-wood instead of as formerly of the ashes of cow-dung. With such concessions to the usages and spirit of Hinduism, it is no marvel that the new method outstripped the old in visible results.

But even so the difficulties which the daring innovator had to face were many and serious. His very success provoked opposition, and the agility and resource which he displayed in the many conflicts that arose furnish convincing evidence of his rare ability. The opposition proceeded from three quite distinct quarters. As might have been expected, the Brahman priests were bitterly antagonistic to the foreign innovator, and though their hostility was, as a rule, discreetly veiled, ever and again the veil was lifted. They distrusted this “Roman Brahman,” but could not prove their distrust to be well founded. In learning and in argument de Nobili easily outclassed and defeated them : and where other measures failed to convince, he contrived by judicious presents to conciliate either

<sup>1</sup>Chandler's *Jesuit Mission in Madura*, p. 14.



his opponents, or the civil rulers without whose backing the priests were powerless to hurt.

More serious was his difficulty with his own Christian converts, who seem to have had a slumbering uneasiness regarding their position. Between them and the Paravan Christians, who were ministered to by Father Fernandez, there yawned a great gulf which it pleased them to consider impassable. In 1610, however, their equanimity was seriously disturbed by a Paravan Christian, who arrived from the Southern Coast, and in plain terms declared that there was no gulf separating the one body of Christians from the other. De Nobili's work was threatened with destruction. His converts were told by this bold Paravan that by their baptism they had forsaken their caste, and had become mere Parangis and Paravans: and still further that de Nobili himself was a Parangi. Consternation reigned, and secessions at once began: and it was only by taking a solemn oath, in which he purged himself and his converts from the alleged contamination, that de Nobili was able to stay the tumult and avert disaster. The oath of purgation furnishes telling evidence of the straits in which the new missionary-method involved its author, and the lengths to which he was obliged to go:—

“I am no Parangi,” so the oath ran, “I was not born on their soil nor am I allied to their race. In this God is my witness, and if I lie, I am willing not only to be deemed a traitor to God, and to be given over to the pains of hell hereafter, but also to

suffer every conceivable chastisement in this world. I was born in Rome. My family are of the rank of noble rajahs in this country. . . . The holy spiritual law which I proclaim does not oblige a man to renounce his caste. . . . This law which I proclaim has been preached in this very land by other men, Sannyasis and Saints alike. Whoever says this law is peculiar to the Paravans or Parangis lies: for since God is Lord of all castes, His law must likewise be observed by all.”<sup>1</sup>

This solemn declaration had the desired effect, and the storm was stayed.

Most serious, however, of all de Nobili's troubles was his conflict with his own ecclesiastical authorities. From Father Fernandez reports reached the Provincial of the Jesuit Order in Malabar, of the extremely strange and novel lines on which de Nobili was working, and the “monstrous mixture of Christianity and idolatry” which he was presenting to the heathen as the holy Christian religion. Alarm was taken, and de Nobili was summoned to Cochin to justify his policy and defend his strange “rites”. This was the beginning of a controversy which lasted more than a decade, and involved the suspension of de Nobili's work at Madura for all that time. From Madura to Cochin, from Cochin to Goa, and from Goa to Rome the controversy was carried, de Nobili at each stage gaining a decisive victory over his opponents: and when, finally, in 1623, Pope Gregory XV. issued his

<sup>1</sup> Chandler, p. 20.

famous bull, the Madura missionary and his methods were completely vindicated.

“Brahmans,” declared the Pope, “are kept from confession of Christ, by difficulties about the cord and the Kudumi. Desiring to procure the conversion of these nations, after suitable discussion, we accord to the Brahmans and other Gentiles the cord, and the Kudumi, sandal paste, and purification of the body. These should not be received in idol temples, but only from priests after they have blessed them.”<sup>1</sup>

It was a dearly bought victory which de Nobili thus obtained. So far as concerned the most cherished desire of his heart, the winning of the Brahmans to Christianity under the guise of a higher Hinduism,—that was ended. The long controversy had made all too plain the intimate connection of de Nobili with the Portuguese Christians of Goa, and henceforward the ears of the high caste men of Madura were closed to his most silvery words. But if the missionary’s greatest dream was shattered, he quickly dreamed anew. The highest castes might indeed be unapproachable, yet there were still caste-men in abundance throughout the land, for whose adhesion he might hope: and fortified as he now was by the express authority of the Pope for the use of the “Madura methods,” he would be free from any risk of interference by the local authorities of the Roman Church. So from 1624 there commenced a new period in de Nobili’s life, and a new activity

<sup>1</sup> Chandler, p. 27.

in which the rôle of recluse was exchanged for that of a wandering religious pilgrim. Clad in the orthodox yellow robe of a Brahman *Guru*, his head swathed in a turban, his feet protected by sandals, and carrying in his hand a pilgrim's long staff, the devoted Jesuit journeyed up and down the country, year in, year out, visiting places so far remote as Trichinopoly and Salem, preaching his gospel of compromise and enduring constant hardship. Many other like-minded priests joined him from time to time, and the "Roman Brahmans" became familiar figures in many a South-Indian town and village. Churches for their numerous followers sprang up in many places, for baptisms were frequent. Not many converts, it would appear, were drawn from the Brahmans, but the less important castes and the non-caste communities are reported to have yielded their thousands. It is quite likely that this was so. To become a Christian called for little or no sacrifice. It was to the converts but a step up in Hinduism, a movement into a new caste. Their old habits met with little interference, and beyond an alteration in the nomenclature of the deities they worshipped, there was often little to show that any change had taken place.

For forty-two years de Nobili lived this life: a life of daily hardship, sacrifice and voluntary humiliation, such as has been seldom paralleled. At the end of that long period, now half-blind and

quite broken down by reason of his labours and privations, the old man withdrew to Ceylon, but he could not remain out of his beloved India. In a little while he crossed the straits again, and journeyed to Mailapur to spend the evening of his days near the holy shrine of St. Thomas. Total blindness now overtook him, and in a rude mud hut he lingered for a few more years, but his austerities were rigorous as ever, and his literary activities continued unabated. Four Brahman secretaries were his constant attendants, and a touching picture has been preserved of their tender devotion in carrying the "Holy Father" every day to the adjoining church for prayer. On February 16, 1656, the end came, when, having reached his eightieth year, this apostle of India, second to none in single-hearted devotedness to his ideal, passed to his rest. Nearly one hundred thousand converts have been attributed to him, directly or indirectly, and allowing for much exaggeration their number must have been very great. Yet, with all this outward success, what a life! Heroic features it possesses in rare abundance, yet—the pity of it! But comment must stand over until the tale is finished; indeed the finish is the best criticism.

### III.

De Nobili died, but his work lived on: and, by like-minded successors the system he had devised was continued and developed. It was a time when

the Roman Church gave her best to the Jesuit Society, and that Society gave its best to India. Xavier's memory was an abiding inspiration. The record of his life, by this time liberally enriched with miraculous episodes, aroused missionary longings in many a young Jesuit priest and drew him to the magic East: and of all the Eastern fields Southern India had the greatest charm. There Xavier himself had worked, and now the added fame of de Nobili intensified its attractive power. Few fields indeed possess so rich a record of devotedness, and fewer still can point to so continuous a succession of able men. But of the many three stand conspicuous above the others. De Nobili was the first of these: the second was *John de Britto*.

The son of one of the noblest Portuguese families, John de Britto, like Xavier before him, was trained for a courtier's life, but he heard the Eastern world calling him, and in 1662, with India in view, when not yet sixteen years of age, he entered the Jesuit Order. Eleven years later he sailed for India. "Night and day," he once wrote to the Superior of the Jesuits early in his novitiate, "I burn with desire to consecrate myself to the salvation of the Hindus, and I pray that you will not command me to any other service."

His was a character in which rare sweetness blended with high devotion. Not without justification has a Protestant South-Indian Missionary of

our own day<sup>1</sup> said of him: "John de Britto is one of the saints in the Roman Catholic Church and he deserves the honour bestowed by the distinction. In the greater Church of all Christ's followers his eminence as a disciple, intrepid, selfless, and enduring in all great qualities that add to the vigour of the Christian life, is assured. He is not only among the first since apostolic days, he is really, with Robert de Nobili, the greatest among the missionaries in India of the Church of Rome, and one of the greatest in the wider Church of Christ."

The encomium is high but it is merited. Two utterances of de Britto himself may be quoted as revealing the man. One comes from his early days, when many persuasive voices were seeking to detain him in his native land, including those of his mother, his Sovereign, and the Supreme Pontiff himself. But to all de Britto had one reply: he had heard the Divine call and that was conclusive.

"I go where God calls me, and when God speaks I cannot listen to men. . . . The way to India may be for me the way to heaven. God gives me the opportunity to make this voyage; if I neglect this, I may never find another, and I may miss the way that should conduct me to heaven. I know God calls me."

The other word dates from the last days of his life, when persecution had driven him to the recesses of an Indian forest, and he knew that a cruel

<sup>1</sup> William Robinson of the L.M.S., from whose sympathetic account of de Britto the various quotations are taken.

death almost certainly impended. To a brother missionary, Jean da Costa, he wrote :—

“They bring me tidings that the King wishes to have my head cut off, and in this fashion put a term to the preaching of the gospel in his land. If it is so we shall all be the sooner in heaven. This report is all over the country, and it is I believe for the glory of God that I still remain here. I place no confidence in myself, for I am nothing, a great sinner, but God gives power to the simple. Meanwhile unbelievers come to the true faith. I confess, I baptize, I administer the sacraments, more than ever: and from all sides they ask me to send teachers. Placed beside this what are all the grandeurs of Europe?”

Between these two unveilings of the soul lay twenty years, which were marked by ceaseless Christian teaching and unbounded Christian benevolence. They were years of marvellous success, for everywhere that the gracious messenger of love went men were drawn to him, especially those who were in distress through sickness or adversity. But the years were filled with much tribulation. Madura, the field which he had chosen because of its exceeding hardness, was then in a state of political anarchy. The old Hindu Kingdom had broken in pieces, and the contest for the fragments was fierce and unceasing. In the absence of a strong supreme authority, petty Rajahs and still pettier chiefs were free to do their worst to any who offended them, and Brahman priests were not slow to persuade the Rajahs that the worst should be done when the offenders chanced to be Christians. And it was done freely.



The Boxer atrocities of the nineteenth century were paralleled by deeds in Madura two hundred years before. Of these de Britto had his own full experience, and it is well that trials so grandly endured should not be forgotten. The persecutions of those Jesuit missionaries are unique in the annals of Indian Missions. On one memorable occasion de Britto was

“bruised all over, then being seized by the feet a rope was tied to his ankles, and he was suspended from a tree. Next his hands were tied and this rope attached to another tree and so devised as to double up the body of the missionary like a link in a chain. For some time he endured this,—then he was taken down, his hands and feet were manacled, with irons, and he was thrown into a sort of den. . . . Next day a rope was tied round his breast, and the end run through a pulley. Then he was dropped repeatedly into the waters of a lake, and kept in the water just to the point of suffocation. Flagellation once more followed, and again he was cast into prison.”

To the native Christians even harder measure was meted out, mutilations, torture and death being in their case of common occurrence.

Yet in spite of all that enemies could do, the worker went steadily on with his accepted duty, and wherever he journeyed the same tale of success was told. To the power of the message was added the charm of the messenger, and his converts were numbered by the thousands. After ten years the unanimous call of his fellow-priests raised de Britto to the position of Superior of the Madura Mission. Six years later came a visit to Portugal where two

years of inspiring work were given by him to the Home Church. Again endeavours were made to retain him in Europe, but again they failed. In a letter written at the time to his brother, who had given valuable gifts to the mission, the returning missionary shows how wholly he was devoted to India :—

“I leave for India as content to go as I was sad to leave the country. They have tried their best to retain me in my own country, but they could not succeed, for I was called to India. Heaven is my fatherland : it is there alone that I can rest, and it is there alone we shall be united without fear of ever being separated. In the meantime I pray the Saviour to protect you and all your family. I give my benediction to my nephews. May God grant us all the grace of saving us. Farewell, with all my heart. Farewell, my brother.”

Not all the hardships he had endured, nor the certainty of like hardships still impending, availed to check the ardour and the sacrifice of this great soul. And those in India knew his greatness and his worth. In a letter written at this period by the General of the Company of Jesuits, this is made very plain, and there is supplied at the same time the best contemporary analysis of John de Britto's worth and work :—

“I believe the non-return of John de Britto will prevent him rendering the greatest service to the cause of God : for this Father has received from heaven all the talents that make great missionaries : a zeal truly apostolic for the spread of our holy faith, an extraordinary gift of preaching and attracting disciples, a perfect knowledge of South Indian languages, and astonishing

success among idolators,—indeed all the qualities that shine in him sufficiently show that God has chosen him for work in India, and not in Europe. In Malabar, his gains will be as a hundred to one—in Portugal the gain would scarcely be one in a hundred. . . . Again what would his brethren lose? His presence among them and the sight of the scars on his body, a glorious testimony of what he has suffered for the faith and love of Jesus Christ, inspires them with great fervour, with ardent zeal, and with the most vivid desire to toil for the good of Indian Christians.”

On February 4, 1693, this devoted Christian missionary met the end which he had long foreseen and did not dread. His success had intensified the Brahman opposition, and when by his hands a Prince of Marava, Tadia Tevar, was baptized, measures were quickly taken to secure de Britto's death. In the Setupathi of Ramnad a facile agent was found for carrying out the deed of hate, and at Oreiyur, on the summit of a small hill, the tragedy took place, the horror of which abides a dark yet glorious memory for the Christian Church of India. Shame and insult had gone before, and when the hour of release came, de Britto gave God thanks. Asking permission to pray, he knelt down, communed with God for a little space, and then calmly offered himself to the sword of the executioner. Mutilation of the dead body followed and burial was denied. Yet, later, some portions of his remains were reverently gathered together, and conveyed to Goa, where they worthily rest in a tomb adjacent to that of the great Xavier:

With the death of de Britto the Mission experienced a temporary check, but soon there came a favourable reaction and the old tide of prosperity flowed anew. The highest point was reached under the third of the great triad of Madura Jesuits, *Father Joseph Beschi*, an Italian priest who reached India in 1707. Beschi adhered to the policy of the "Roman Brahmans," but in his missionary practice differed considerably from his predecessors. De Nobili, so long as it had been possible, acted the part of a devout recluse, a holy Guru; de Britto had been chiefly the wandering Sannyasi, the holy pilgrim; and in their personal life both had practised the greatest asceticism and simplicity. But Father Beschi followed a new line. If Hinduism has its ascetics, it has also its high priests who live in luxurious comfort, and whose outward surroundings are marked by pomp and circumstance. This was the line chosen by Beschi: by magnificence he would dazzle the people. When he travelled it was in a costly palanquin. In advance went an attendant bearing an umbrella of purple silk, at each side ran servants with gorgeous fans of peacock's feathers; and in the palanquin, upon a splendid tiger-skin and clad in rich and picturesque robes, reclined the mighty Guru! But Beschi was no empty-headed *poseur*. His method was adopted with a full understanding of the people and with many it worked well. Nor does his fame rest on these extravagances: it is based upon his wonderful scholarship.

A born linguist he attained so complete a mastery over Tamil that he became the ablest Tamil scholar of his time. No native scholar was his equal. "High" Tamil as well as "Low," the Tamil of the scholarly Brahman as well as the colloquial language of the people, were equally familiar to Beschi. Dictionaries, grammars, works in poetry, and treatises in prose issued from his busy pen, which are read and valued to the present day. When first issued they delighted the native world of Southern India. So charmed with his learning was Chanda Sahib, the Nabob of Vellore, that he appointed him to high office in the State, and for his support presented him with four villages in the Trichinopoly district, which brought in a yearly revenue of 12,000 rupees. All this fame and material prosperity Beschi loyally used for the furtherance of the Mission; but, it must also be said, partly for the oppression of the infant Danish Mission at Tranquebar. Of this, the first Protestant Mission in India, Beschi was a virulent and unscrupulous opponent; but of the Madura Mission he was a most successful upbuilder. Its palmiest days were in his time, and its rapid decline, leading to its ultimate collapse, dates from about the period of Father Beschi's death, which occurred in 1742.

#### IV.

From the founding of the Madura Mission by de Nobili, in 1606, to the death of Father Beschi is a

period of nearly a century and a half, and throughout that long stretch of years de Nobili's missionary method of accommodation and compromise had been steadily pursued. Estimated by the numerical accessions to Christianity which it secured, the method might legitimately be pronounced a triumphant success, one that might have been expected to have filled the workers with a rare jubilation. Yet when the inner workings of the Mission are examined, and the habitual mind of the missionaries is considered, while rejoicing is by no means wanting, far more evident is the presence of constant anxiety and abiding dread,—dread lest the radical deceptions on which their work was based should be discovered, and anxiety lest the measures taken to prevent discovery should fail. However the missionaries may have disguised or excused the fact, it remains undeniable that their whole system was based on a series of calculated falsehoods,—that de Nobili and his companions were Brahmans, that they had nought to do with the Parangi or European Christians, that they were caste-men and not pariahs, that Hinduism *with a development* was their religion. Upon the acceptance of this multifold falsehood the entire success of the scheme depended. Should the deception be discovered, ruin was inevitable, and those difficulties which de Nobili had encountered in the early days became increasingly the experience of his successors. Indeed the partial exposure which overtook

de Nobili made it yet more difficult for those who followed him to maintain the fiction, and in the endeavour they were constrained to take ever deeper plunges into the mire of dissimulation.

It is a pitiful story. From the watchful eyes of the Hindus there was always danger. To avert the suspicion that the missionaries were Parangis, a first essential was complete abstention on their part from any intercourse with Europeans. That sacrifice was unhesitatingly made. In every detail of their life the "Roman Brahmans" identified themselves with the natives. It may not sound very much, yet it needs little consideration to realise how much it must have meant to these high-born delicately nurtured men, thus to isolate themselves from their own race, and live and die in the frequently repulsive surroundings of Hinduism. Yet they did it, through a long succession of years. Of one devoted priest it is told that when cast into prison by a native Rajah, though an appeal to the European Power at the coast would have resulted in his release, he refused to make the appeal, lest it might lead to the discovery of his Parangi blood. So he stayed, and died—a martyr for a great deception! And even short of death, the sufferings voluntarily endured by a long succession of these devoted priests furnish impressive evidence of the terrible cost at which the system of de Nobili was maintained.

But more to be deplored than the degradation of

the life of the missionaries was the rapid deterioration of the religion which they represented and proclaimed. In maintaining the initial fraud, as the years passed, an increasing Hinduising of even the bastard Christianity of de Nobili's time came to be necessary. Partly from the dulling of the Christian conscience which resulted from the daily contact with heathenism, and partly from considerations of policy, more and more of Hindu customs were embraced, until when we read the records of the later times it seems as if the merest tincture of Christianity is all that remains. Caste distinctions are rigorously observed. Pariah congregations have their pariah catechists, high caste have their Roman Gurus. Processions of gorgeous cars take place on feast days, the only difference between such *tamashas* and those of the Hindus, being that the cars of the Christians are surmounted by the figure of the Virgin in place of that of a heathen god. Half-nude dancers accompany the cars in their progress, tom-toms beat, horns sound, and all the usual revelry of a Hindu religious festival is present. Hindus are as hearty in their help as are the Christians: when Hindu festivals come round, Christians in the same brotherly way give a helping hand. To them the difference is infinitesimal. Marriages between children of tender years are the rule, and in the marriage service much base heathen ritual is adopted. From the necks of the married women hangs the indecent image of a Hindu god,



—modified in later years by having the cross engraved on the figure of the idol. To such a shameful level had de Nobili's policy led! Verily to be a Brahman to the Brahmans, a Hindu to the Hindus, is a policy of peril for Christianity.

## V.

What had Rome to say to these developments of the novel policy of her favourite Order? In de Nobili's day Rome had given the policy her benediction, little thinking to what it would lead. But to Rome's honour be it said, that once she clearly understood its nature, and the practices which it encouraged, she condemned the policy, and in the end overthrew it. The process was a long one, and presents the curious spectacle of a hundred years' contest between the Jesuits and the Roman Church. For long the Jesuit policy was to blind Rome, and for this purpose glowing reports were penned from the mission-field, which spread the fame of Madura over the whole of Christendom. There, men were told, the wonders of the Church's early days were being renewed. Miracles were a daily occurrence, the heavenly powers were ever active in protecting Christians from the wrath of the heathen and from the rage of the wild beasts of the land; and as to these Christians,—rarely had such saintliness been seen in Christian Europe as was a daily spectacle in the plains of Madura!

"Yes," exclaims Father Tr  mblay, the writer of one of these letters, "the Christians of India adore one God in spirit and in truth. Their worship is pure and without mixture. Their aversion to idolatry is carried even to scrupulousness. Often they refuse to look upon the false gods, to pass before their temples, or to touch anything employed in the ceremonies of the Gentiles! Hunger, thirst, persecutions, the privation of their goods, and the most cruel outrages cannot shake them. As the symbol of their faith, they usually have the cross marked on their foreheads, and the only name they give to the idols is that of demon!"<sup>1</sup>

V  rily, a master of romance was Father Tremblay : and there were many such masters in Madura in those days, who kept Rome supplied with like fairy tales. Occasionally tales of a different kind reached her from other sources, but in the face of such glowing accounts she was unwilling to act, and Jesuit influence was strong. But in the beginning of the eighteenth century the scandals waxed so numerous and so serious that inaction was no longer possible, and in 1703 a papal legate was sent out to India to make full inquiries into the matter. The legate, Cardinal de Tournon, was a man of character and ability, but in his investigations he considered that it was quite permissible to trap the Jesuits with their own weapon of guile. Two leading members of the mission were summoned to Pondicherry to a private conference, and simulating sympathy the legate won their confidence, whereupon they made a clean breast of everything, told how hard at first

<sup>1</sup> See able art. in *Calcutta Review*, vol. ii., by the Rev. W. S. McKay.

it was for new missionaries to embrace the system of imposture, and entered into full details. Concealed in the room was a reporter who took notes of everything that was said, and thus armed with conclusive proof, Cardinal de Tournon forthwith issued a decree in the papal name, condemning the whole system of subterfuge, and ordering the obnoxious and disgraceful practices to cease.

From that hour the Madura Mission was doomed. It could live only in darkness and now light had come: but it was long ere the doom was accomplished. With every possible weapon the Jesuits fought their battle. De Tournon was naturally the object of their greatest hate, and soon afterwards he died in prison at Macao, attributing his death to Jesuit machinations. At Rome they sought for modifications of the decree, while at Madura they refused to obey it. By Clement XI. brief after brief was issued against them, in which they were described as "obstinate and impudent". Clement XII. told them they were like the Samaritans "who feared the Lord and served their graven images," and sent a stringent oath to be taken by every priest, solemnly abjuring all their false ways. The oath was taken, but the rites went on unaltered. At last Rome's patience was exhausted, and in 1741 Pope Benedict XIV. sent forth a Bull in which he described the Jesuits as "refractory, perverse, rebellious, lost," and issued a brief to be read to every congregation, which made plain the unchristian

character of the system so laboriously reared, and of the practices so tenaciously adhered to. Reluctantly the Jesuits had at last to accept defeat, and in 1759, on the suppression of their Order in Portugal, the remaining members of the fast-dwindling force of Jesuits in India were deported from its shores.

Their departure meant the collapse of the long-famous Madura Mission, and the completeness of the ruin that befel is the severest criticism on the system. The tens of thousands of converts with which the mission had been credited melted away, the great majority lapsing back into that heathenism from which they had never really emerged. And of those who remained nominally Christians, the record, as given by the famous Abbé Dubois, is even more melancholy. Dubois was a French Jesuit missionary, who laboured for thirty-two years in Mysore in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, and finally despairing of success returned to Europe. He tells that in his time the native Christians of the Madura Mission numbered only 33,000, and the account he gives of their spiritual condition is surely one of the saddest ever penned by a missionary. They are described as sunk in the lowest deep of demoralisation, abjectly superstitious, and without a spark of real spiritual life or conviction of the truth of their religion. In proof of his strictures he tells of the "scandalous

apostasy" of the native Christian prisoners of Tippoo Sultan. There were 60,000 of them, all the fruit of Jesuit labours, and these when taken to Seringapatam were ordered by Tippoo to undergo the rite of circumcision and become converts to Mohammedanism, under pain of death.

"Oh, shame! Oh, scandal!" cries the Abbé, "Will it be believed in the Christian World? No one, not a single individual among so many thousands, had courage enough to confess his faith and become a martyr to his religion. The whole apostatised *en masse*, no one among them possessing resolution enough to say, 'I am a Christian and I will die rather than renounce my religion'. So general a defection, so dastardly an apostasy, is, I believe, unexampled in the annals of Christianity."

By their fruits ye shall know them. For two hundred years the Jesuit Mission had existed and this was the result. In infamy it perished, with its methods condemned by the Roman Church, its labours declared by one of its own devoted sons to have been spiritually barren, while, worst of all, through its action the Church of Christ had become branded in the eyes of the Hindus as an institution based on falsehood and buttressed by deceit. Not for the first time, nor the last, the Lord Jesus Christ was wounded in the house of his friends.

## VI.

The Jesuit Madura Mission of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has left to later Christian

Missions in India a legacy in which grave warning is linked with sound instruction. The warning note is by far the louder of the two : so shrill indeed is it that it has largely diverted from the more positive note the attention which is well deserved. No one can be blind to the two major errors of de Nobili or fail to condemn them, and the shipwreck which they ultimately brought upon the mission only emphasises their extreme gravity. In the attitude he adopted towards Caste, and in his attempt to conceal his own nationality, de Nobili initiated an essentially unchristian policy which ensured the ultimate defeat of his cherished projects. To regard caste, as he did, as primarily a social institution void of religious significance, was a fatal error of judgment, sufficiently pardonable for one to have made in the early days of his Indian experience, but inexcusable when left uncorrected by the fuller knowledge which must have come with the passage of the years. How fatal the mistake the subsequent history of the mission abundantly proved. Caste stands pilloried there as an institution essentially hostile to the Christian religion, an element in Hinduism whose spirit and power are utterly irreconcilable with the spirit and power of Christ. To admit caste into the Church resulted then, as it has resulted ever since when the fatal step has been permitted, in its mastering the Church, emptying it of humility and loveliness and brotherly kindness, and filling it with a spirit and ways that know not the

Master. Of the extreme gravity of de Nobili's error in this vital matter the Reformed Churches have to-day no shadow of doubt. But moderate writers of his own Church are hardly less emphatic, though their condemnation is sometimes apparently due rather to the fact that the method failed than that itself was inherently wrong. Says Müllbauer, the Roman Catholic historian :—

“The preservation of caste might as a matter of fact be condoned, if it had had the result hoped for by Father Nobili, if the higher castes as well as the lower had gone over to Christianity, and if its spirit had aroused within them the consciousness that they were children of our Father with equal rights, and if the iron yoke of India, the system of caste, had been thus broken. But sad experience teaches us a very different result. For 150 years the missionaries worked without ceasing among Indian Christians, but there was neither any mass-movement among the higher castes, nor was there the least amalgamation of the various classes among the Christians themselves: and after Father Nobili had left the mission (1648), and the charm of novelty wore off, the Jesuits found themselves once more reduced to working almost exclusively among the Sudras and Pariahs.”<sup>1</sup>

On grounds of expediency therefore, as well as of Christian principle, de Nobili's treatment of caste stands condemned.

No more pardonable was the evasion by which he endeavoured to conceal his own racial connection with the other Europeans in India. The policy which led to the evasion is not difficult to under-

<sup>1</sup> Müllbauer, *Geschichte der Katholischen Missionen in Ostindien*.

stand, but its morality is indefensible. To himself de Nobili justified his repudiation of the term "Parangi," by affecting to regard the word as one which connoted all the vices of the lowest Europeans. These vices were admittedly none of his, and accordingly he disavowed the name. He was not a "Parangi". "If he prove me to be Parangi," he said on one occasion of a Brahman accuser, "let my eyes be plucked out: if not, his eyes shall be plucked out."

But this was mere playing with words: and when in time the natives of Madura discovered the play, they despised the speaker and his successors. So it ever is when the messengers of Him who is the Truth lapse into dubious speech. There is a nemesis in store: and these twin errors of de Nobili, with their consequences, furnish an impressive warning of the need for unwavering veracity, alike in judgment and in speech, on the part of ambassadors of Christ.

It will always be something of a puzzle to reconcile satisfactorily the men of the Madura Mission with the methods they employed: the men with so much in them that compels admiration, and their methods with so much that must meet with our reprobation. How could such men do such things? Probably the link which best explains this stooping of honourable souls to dishonourable practices is found in the sacramentarian ideas which formed the very heart of their religion. Of the Jesuit



missionaries, in general, Sir W. Robertson Nicoll has said, very frankly but also very truly, "They sought to attain the chief end of Christ in this world by illegitimate means. The fact may be put in various ways. I prefer to say that the Jesuits believed that the world could be converted by magic. This led them into kindred errors, till their gospel became a mere caricature of Christianity."<sup>1</sup> That this judgment is true let Madura witness. To one who firmly believes in the saving efficacy of baptism, though it be administered only as an external rite, in his endeavour to administer that rite to perishing souls many a course of action will be possible and will appear pardonable, which otherwise he would instinctively condemn and avoid. De Nobili and his successors held this and other allied beliefs with the utmost conviction: hence resulted with regrettable facility the obliquity of intellectual judgment which permitted a misreading of caste, and the perversion of moral judgment which sanctioned a system of deception. So, most charitably as well as most probably, may be explained those grave declensions by good and earnest men from the accepted paths of truth and right.

It is a relief to turn from these legacies of warning, and consider the positive contributions to missionary method with which de Nobili and his fellow-workers may justly be credited. Here one

<sup>1</sup> *Carey Lecture*, 1911.

is amazed and delighted with their wonderful modernity. In quite a number of points of missionary strategy their principles and ideals, though not their practices, closely resemble those of the present day. Prominent among such is their emphatic recognition of Caste as holding the key to the situation in India. No doubt earlier missionaries may have also observed this, but it was de Nobili who first made it the main objective in missionary endeavour to capture this key for Christ. In the methods by which he sought to achieve this capture he went hopelessly astray: yet in the emphasis which he put on this as the supreme goal, short of which India would never be won, he speaks with the ripest wisdom of to-day. Even more surprising is the modern note in the attitude he adopted towards the Hindu religion. With all its errors, he acknowledged in Hinduism the presence also of some truth of God. The phrase indeed which a recent brilliant study has made familiar, as in some respects descriptive of Christianity,—“the Crown of Hinduism,”—would have been accepted in all its entirety by de Nobili, for this was precisely the character in which he sought to present to the Hindus the religion of Christ. Here again the errors he made in seeking to apply the principle were grievous, but his ready discernment of the good amidst abundant environments of evil, and the breadth of view which acknowledged the working of the divine Spirit in other faiths than his own, scarcely find a parallel in Indian Missions until quite

modern days. Closely connected with this broad outlook on the ways of God with non-Christian peoples, was the earnest and diligent study which these seventeenth century missionaries gave to the native religions. They mastered their contents with a thoroughness rarely equalled by the Hindus themselves. To-day it is a first principle in missionary circles that it is a binding duty on every fair-minded missionary to give serious study to the religions prevailing in the field where he works. In this respect de Nobili was as modern as the most advanced missionary student of to-day, for with him the study of Hinduism was a life-long occupation. Nor was the modern note less clear and emphatic as regards the need for missionaries possessing a thorough knowledge of the vernacular. Schools of language-study, established in every field, are the means now being adopted to secure this indispensable mastery of the native tongues by every worker. De Nobili and his successors had no such school, but they equally realised the extreme importance of the accomplishment, and their own powers and achievements as linguists have never been surpassed. Tamil, Telegu, and Sanskrit were to them as familiar as their mother tongues. Yet again the spirit of to-day appears in the anxiety of de Nobili to present Christianity to the Hindus, as free as might be from Western colour, and as full as might be of the hue the Eastern loves. It was in this endeavour indeed that the shipwreck was most tragic, and for

the next two hundred years that tragedy kept later missions from countenancing, or even seriously considering any similar aim. Yet now the old ideal is becoming increasingly acknowledged as true and worthy of endeavour,—if only the perils incident to it can be avoided.

Had these modern ideals only been linked to a theology less mediaeval and to a religion more truly spiritual, what might the devoted men who cherished them not have accomplished? Certain it is that no tale of tragic failure would have had to be recorded, and the place of Christianity in India would to-day be far larger and stronger than it is. For the failure of those who laboured was undoubtedly due, not so much to the men themselves, as to the errors of the creed, and the defects of the system, under which they worked. Freed from these limitations, the workers had done great things indeed. So it comes that despite their many faults, and despite too the grave hurt their errors inflicted on the cause and name of Christ, the men of the Madura Mission are remembered with that respect which sacrificing devotion to a high ideal ever receives. Erring apostles they were, but they have a right to a place in the great succession, as apostles who to their conception of their Christian duty were conspicuously faithful.

## CHAPTER VII

BARTHOLOMEW ZIEGENBALG

(1683-1719)

THE Churches of the Reformation were for long strangely and regrettably non-missionary. At a time when Rome was sending many of her noblest sons to plant the Cross in the remotest parts of the world, and through their heroic though often mistaken endeavours was effecting great conquests in the name of Christ, Protestantism neither sent missionaries nor made conquests. It took its theology from that prince of missionaries, the Apostle Paul, but did not seek to copy his example in preaching to the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ. The duty of so doing was not denied: it was simply not recognised, and accordingly was not attempted. To-day, when the Reformed Churches take the lead in missionary enterprise, this apathy of Protestantism in the earlier days seems doubly strange; yet it is not difficult to explain though impossible entirely to excuse. It may be pleaded and with perfect truth, that for a century and a half after Luther spoke the word that startled Europe and rent the Church, the

Reformed Churches had to fight for their very life. It was a time when they were building up their own constitution and formulating their own theology: and in the press of these exacting and necessary labours they had neither energy nor thought nor men to spare, to care for the heathen in the far parts of the earth. It may be pleaded too, and again with truth, that the nations who espoused the Reformed Faith most keenly were not, in those days, the most maritime nations of the world; and consequently not being to any large extent brought face to face with the non-Christian peoples, they missed the missionary stimulus which contact with heathenism produces. And this also may be pleaded—that to the earlier Reformers it seemed that the end of all things was at hand, and with that climax imminent men's nearest duties became their only duties. "Another hundred years," said Luther, "and all will be over. The Gospel is despised. God's word will disappear for want of any to preach it. Mankind will turn into Epicureans and care for nothing. They will not believe that God exists. Then the voice will be heard, Behold the Bridegroom cometh."

But however greatly these various considerations may have conduced to missionary apathy, the main contributing cause was much simpler. It was that the Churches did not realise that they had a missionary duty to discharge. Erasmus indeed had declared it to them in the noble words of his great treatise, *On the Art of Preaching*: "It is a hard work I call

you to, but it is the noblest and highest of all. Would that God had accounted me worthy to die in such a holy work, rather than to be consumed by slow death in the tortures I endure. Yet no one is fit to preach the gospel to the heathens who has not made his mind superior to riches or pleasure, aye, even to life and death itself. The cross is never wanting to those who preach the word of the Lord in truth." But the trumpet call fell on deaf ears, and found no echo in the exhortations of any prominent leader of the Reformers. In the Churches of the Reformation in the sixteenth century the missionary spirit had not yet been born: nor was it born until the seventeenth century had well advanced. Before it attained any vigour of life the eighteenth century had ended, and only in the nineteenth century did the claims of Foreign Missions begin to receive any general recognition. So slow has been the development in Protestant circles of this central feature of the Church's life! And when at length the development did begin, India was later in sharing in its benefits than were many less important countries. Yet some atonement for this delay is found in the high excellence of the men who ultimately went forth as the pioneers of Protestant Indian Missions, of whom none stands higher than the first of them all, *Bartholomew Ziegenbalg*.

## I.

The beginning of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of Protestant Indian Missions: yet

throughout the whole of the previous century there had been Protestant contact with India. With the waning of the power of Spain and Portugal there had come to the developing Protestant nations of Europe the opportunity of breaking the monopoly in the Eastern trade, which these two Latin peoples had so long enjoyed, and of themselves sharing in its lucrative commerce. In 1600 were founded the two great East India Companies of Holland and of England, rivals in trade, but happily concerned with a country where there was abundant room for both.

France quickly followed suit, combining with trading activities keen ambitions for territory and political power; and in 1616 little Denmark also produced an East India Company. Trading settlements of these various nationalities sprang up all along the southern coast of India, and Dutch, English, French and Danes energetically prosecuted a trade, profitable alike to India and themselves. The companies grew rich, and Europe became familiar with the fame of India as the land of the "pagoda tree," where men had only to shake the branches and golden pagodas dropped into the waiting hand. Still for nearly one hundred years, in spite of this rich harvest from the East, there was no thought of any religious duty owing to the peoples of the land whence the great wealth was drawn. India was regarded as a country to be exploited for gain,—and nothing more. This base materialism of the seventeenth century will ever remain a blot on the



record of Protestantism, and when at long last some thoughts of Christian duty did arise, it was, strangely enough, in the mind and heart of the smallest and least influential of all the Powers concerned, that the spiritual moving took place. To Denmark belongs the honour of redeeming Protestantism from the century-long dishonour, and in the Danish Settlement of Tranquebar, on the Coromandel Coast, Protestant Missions to India began.

How the missionary interest was ultimately aroused is the subject of a pleasing tradition. It happened—so runs the story—that one evening in March, 1705, King Frederick IV. of Denmark was busy in his palace perusing some official papers which had arrived from his over-sea dominions, and a paper which specially interested him was one from Tranquebar. This was an appeal for a pension from the widow of a Danish soldier, who had lost both husband and son in some skirmish with the natives. Out of her sorrow and penury the widow appealed to the King, and the royal heart was touched. From considerations of the woman's sad lot, his thoughts turned to the condition and needs of the heathen who had wrought this sorrowful deed. What was he doing for them? Surely this was a divine leading! What effort was he making to convey to those Hindus the riches of the Gospel, in return for the material wealth which he and his people were drawing from India? And he had to answer—nothing. His conscience awoke, and there and then

he resolved to atone for past neglect. Dr. Lütken, his chaplain, was hastily summoned, and heard with glad surprise the King's resolve. When asked where he could find a suitable missionary the good old man replied: "Here am I. Send me." But that was impossible. His age alone unfitted him for such an enterprise. So with the command from the King to look out suitable men for the great work he had to be satisfied, and the momentous interview, which marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the Reformed Churches of Europe, ended.

But where were men to be found who were qualified for this unique enterprise? Not in Denmark, for the Danish Church was in the comatose condition that marked so many churches in the eighteenth century. But perhaps in Germany they might be discovered, for there the Pietist movement had begun. At Halle, the centre of the movement, the dead bones of German orthodoxy were being marvellously stirred, and under the influence of the saintly Francke numbers of young men were being trained for Christian work and fired with Christian zeal. At Berlin was a friend of Lütken, Professor Lange, who was also a friend of Francke, so to Lange appeal was made, and on his recommendation the choice fell on two young German pastors, Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg and his friend and companion Heinrich Plütschau.

When the call reached Ziegenbalg he was a young man of twenty-two years of age. Born on June 24,

1683, at the little town of Pulsnitz, near Dresden, he had been early orphaned. Struggling through a delicate youth, both in his school days at Gorlitz, and later at the Universities of Berlin and Halle, he had proved an indomitable student. At Halle, Pietist influences laid hold upon him, and, though with much self-distrust, the holy ministry became his goal. No thought of the mission-field at that time entered his mind, yet a seed-word spoken by Dr. Breithaupt of Halle University proved ultimately to have been germinating. "To lead one soul from among the heathen to God," said this good man, "is as much as if, in Europe, one brought a hundred, for here the means and opportunities abound and there they have none." But for a little while Christian Germany was to be Ziegenbalg's sphere, and in the parish of Werder, some twenty miles from Berlin, he was doing faithful pastoral work when the call from his old professor reached him. It was a call to proceed as a missionary either to Africa or to the West Indies, and Ziegenbalg shrank from accepting it. Part of his disinclination vanished when he was told that his old friend Plütschau had been similarly called and had responded, and ultimately coming to recognise the guiding finger of God in the summons, he obeyed. Along with Plütschau he proceeded to Copenhagen, to find that neither Africa nor the West Indies but *Tranquebar* on the South-East coast of India was their destined field; but once the call had been accepted all places were alike, and on

November 29th, 1705, the two pioneers sailed for the distant settlement, which their presence and work was destined to immortalise. Their modest allowance, only 6,000 marks, was made a charge on the royal purse. The King's favour was theirs in a marked degree, and with that and the commendation and prayers of their revered teachers they looked forward with eager anticipation to a successful work.

## II.

Tranquebar, whither the missionaries were hastening, was a territory of modest dimensions which had been purchased by the Danes from the Rajah of Tanjore. Five miles long by three miles broad, it contained the town of Tranquebar and fifteen villages, large and small. Here a prosperous settlement had been established, peopled by settlers of varied type: Danish and German merchants with their staffs of assistants, a Governor, who in this case was by birth a Norwegian, and his suite, and a handful of European troops, mainly of Danish or German nationality. For ninety years the ordinary routine of business life had gone on, varied by the few pleasures which an Indian life offered in those days to European residents, and with the outward religious proprieties observed by a weekly service in the garrison church, conducted by the government chaplain. Neither chaplains nor civilians

however had ever dreamt of undertaking aggressive Christian work among the natives of the country, nor was it desired, either by them or by the Company in Denmark, that any such work should be undertaken. To the settlers in Tranquebar the news of the impending arrival of two missionaries was accordingly decidedly unwelcome. It seemed as if a strange disturbing element was to be introduced into the familiar comfortable routine, and the settlement resented it. In this attitude they were supported and encouraged by the Company they served, the leading officials of which in Denmark had viewed with extreme disfavour the King's missionary enterprise. They could not indeed oppose their sovereign directly, but they took measures to thwart his noble purpose, and to the Company's servants in Tranquebar secret instructions went out, to put every possible hindrance in the way of the missionaries, and if they could, to bring the whole enterprise to a speedy end. To the Governor of the settlement, J. C. Hassius, these commands were thoroughly congenial, and without compunction or delay he proceeded to carry them out.

On 9th July, 1706, after a tedious voyage of seven months, the ship, in which the missionaries were, cast anchor off Tranquebar, but anything more disheartening than the reception given to Ziegenbalg and his comrade can scarcely be imagined. Every other passenger was conveyed ashore, but no boat

came to convey the missionaries, and on board ship they had to remain for several days, in sight of their goal but prevented by their own countrymen from reaching it. At last, in very pity, the captain of a ship lying near sent his own boat, and in that they were conveyed to land. "It was early in the morning," writes Dr. Fleming Stevenson, in a notable passage, "and they were ordered to remain in a house before the gate till the Governor had leisure to come in the afternoon. On his arrival, assuming the utmost roughness, he asked what brought them there. They were a mere nuisance. Had they any authority? What could he do? That was no place for missionaries. They were not wanted. What could the King know about such things? And so he turned upon his heel, and withdrew with his suite into the Fort.

"Petrified by this contempt for the King's mandate, as much as cast down by so unexpected a reception, the two young men slowly followed, expecting that some one would inform them of the arrangements made for their stay. But at the market-square the group suddenly separated, and in a moment Governor, Council, and chaplain had disappeared, and the square was empty. The sun had set, and as the houses were already shrouded in gloom the strangers could not tell what turn to take, but watched and waited under the silent stars—the first Protestant missionaries that ever stood on Indian soil, wondering much what would happen next, and bethinking

themselves that even the 'Son of Man had not where to lay his head'." <sup>1</sup>

It was a cruel welcome, and proved only too symptomatic of the experiences that lay plentifully in store, not for these Danish missionaries only, but for many another Protestant missionary who, in those earlier days, journeyed to India to preach the Gospel. The frequent official opposition with which they had to contend imprints an indelible stain on the record of Protestant dominance, from which, with all its faults, Roman rule in India had been free. Secret opposition and even open hostility from those Europeans whose private life finds itself condemned by the purer example and teaching of the missionaries, or whose business prosperity is interfered with by the religious animosities which ever and again Christian missions arouse,—these have been the experiences of many missionaries, whether Roman or Reformed; and equally common has been the stumbling-block caused to Christian progress by the unchristian lives of many who bear the Christian name. Xavier had bewailed these things at Goa, and at Tranquebar Ziegenbalg wrote in similar strain:—

“All our demonstrations about the excellency of the Christian constitution make but a very slight impression, while they find Christians generally so much debauched in their manners, and so given up to gluttony, drunkenness, lewdness, cursing, swearing, cheating, and cozening, notwithstanding all

<sup>1</sup> *Dawn of Modern Missions*, p. 62.

their precious pretences to the best religion. But more particularly are they offended with that proud and insulting temper which is so obvious in the conduct of our Christians here.”<sup>1</sup>

But *official* hostility on the part of the Europeans towards ministers of their own religion—this was absolutely new in India. Roman missionaries had ever behind them, if not the sympathy, at least the protection of the Portuguese and Spanish authorities within their own territories. Private hostility dared not go to extremes. But for Ziegenbalg and many another there was no such helping and restraining influence, and when he and Plütschau stood derelict on the square of Tranquebar they tasted the beginning of a petty and malignant persecution, which was destined to last for years. Only too keenly did Governor Hassius carry out the shameful instructions sent secretly from home. Every possible obstacle was put in the missionaries' way, insults public and private were heaped upon them, calculated to degrade them in the eyes of the natives, and if bitter opposition could have ended the mission, then in spite of its enjoying the countenance of Denmark's King, it certainly would have come to a speedy close. But Ziegenbalg and Plütschau were more than King Frederick's missionaries. They served the King of Kings, and a reception that would have caused many a man to despair only nerved these two brave souls for the

<sup>1</sup> *Propagation of the Gospel in the East*, etc.—Letters from Ziegenbalg.



work that lay so abundantly before them. Welcome or unwelcome they were there. A house had to be assigned to them, and with the tenacity of purpose, the steady devotion to work, the disregard of mere temporal comforts, and the ready adaptation to circumstances, which mark their countrymen in many a foreign land, these two young German missionaries set to work. Behind them they were conscious of the divine call and the divine power, and in that they found the needed strength and courage. "God alone," wrote Ziegenbalg, "is here able to do the work by His power, and make that possible which appears to our eyes altogether impossible."

### III.

No later missionaries to India are ever called to a task quite so difficult as that which faced these two pioneers. The modern missionary begins his work, familiar to a large extent with the methods, and enriched by the experiences, of many generations of missionaries. The track is well beaten, the ways of working are recognised, and though from time to time new conditions demand a readjustment of methods, such changes never amount to starting afresh on radically different and entirely novel lines. It was otherwise with Ziegenbalg and Plütschau. They had to make the track, they had to discover the ways. Rome's experiences profited them little, even less than little, for they proved

more hurtful than helpful. Christian Missions to India were making a fresh start. To the missionaries everything was new and strange—the people, their religion, their customs, their thoughts, their language—and the problem which faced these pioneers was,—How to penetrate through this strange environment, and present Christ to the human hearts that were beating underneath it all. Counsellors they had none. Even had their European fellow-countrymen been disposed to help, this was a problem beyond them. All alone, aided only by God, the task had to be faced. And it was faced splendidly—faced and wrought out with a combination of wisdom, ability, patience and devoted zeal that has never been surpassed. Dr. Duff, who was always a great admirer of Ziegenbalg, considered that one great secret of his success lay in the open mind he brought to his task. He was not wedded to any theory of missionary method, nor did he feel called on to limit his activity to certain spheres. His methods were decided according as each need arose, and no field of action was neglected where service in any measure could be rendered to the main cause. In possessing these characteristics Ziegenbalg was the type of a missionary pioneer.

The first difficulty to be attacked and removed was clearly the language, and in the case of Ziegenbalg and his comrade this was a difficulty of

no ordinary magnitude. They were Germans in a Danish settlement, ignorant even of the language of the governing power, and limited therefore in their intercourse not only with the natives but also with the Europeans. But the natives were their chief concern, and the study of Danish was not a consideration with them. To reach the natives ~~two~~ *media* of communication offered, Tamil and Portuguese. Tamil, or Malabarick, as Ziegenbalg calls it in his letters, was the language of the country, and its mastery was evidently a prime necessity; but Portuguese was also widely familiar either in pure or corrupted form, the result of the long presence of the Portuguese in India, and the uprising of a considerable population of mixed blood in and near their settlements. For many of the natives, as well as for this half-caste population, Portuguese was a *lingua franca*, easier of acquisition by the missionaries than Tamil, and offering them a quicker means of commencing active evangelisation. So the study of both languages was entered on, but that of Tamil with especial determination. Tamil holds a prominent place among the Indian languages in point of difficulty, and the rapid progress made by Ziegenbalg must ever be matter of admiration. Six days after their arrival in India, he and his companion began its study, but the only teacher to be got was one who knew no German, so there was little likelihood of satisfactory advance, seeing that teacher and pupils had no common medium of com-

munication. Ziegenbalg, however, was not to be daunted. He resolved to begin at the beginning, and along with Plütschau joined the school for children which was taught by their instructor. There the two sat down among the little pupils, repeated along with them the A,B,C of Tamil, and wrote their exercises as they did, with the finger in the sand. Clearly no common men these: and their progress was not common either. Ziegenbalg especially shot forward with most rare speed. In eight months he could converse intelligibly with the natives, and in twelve months fluently, whether in conversation, argument or preaching. With growing knowledge of the language came a quickly deepening acquaintance with its literature, and a library of native books began to accumulate. Strange books they were, strips of the leaf of the palmyra palm pierced with a stylus and then fixed together, but they introduced Ziegenbalg to the riches and beauty of much of the Tamil literature.

“I chose such books,” he wrote, “as I should wish to imitate, both in speaking and writing, and had such authors read to me a hundred times, that there might not be a word or expression which I did not know, or could not imitate.”

Strenuous self-educators as were these missionaries, from the start they also found time, or made time, for work of a directly missionary nature. So far as the Hindus were concerned such work had perforce to wait until the language had been acquired. But there were other than Tamils who

might be helped in the meantime. There were the missionaries' own German countrymen, who were numerous among the employees of the settlement. For them Ziegenbalg and his comrade began to hold services in a private room, which quickly became so well attended that, with the permission of the Governor, who judged it prudent here to modify his hostility, they were transferred to the garrison church, and held at an hour when the Danish chaplains did not officiate. Then the so-called "Portuguese" claimed attention, the numerous population of mixed blood in and around the settlement, for the most part poor and degraded, brought up practically as natives yet marked off by the bar of blood and language. Hitherto the children of this community had been regarded as the appointed charge of the Roman Catholic priests, and even where the fathers of the children were Protestants this arrangement was complacently approved. Ziegenbalg could be no party to any such procedure, and he had not been long in the country before he opened a school for these children, where instruction in religion and secular knowledge was imparted, Portuguese being the language medium. And yet another class was accessible—the "slaves" of the settlement. These were unfortunate Hindus, who for the sake of food had given themselves to be the serfs of the Danish settlers. At Ziegenbalg's request these "slaves" were sent by their masters for two hours every day, to receive instruction in

religion from the missionaries, whose teaching capacity increased as their knowledge of the language grew. So the early days passed, with the missionaries eagerly acquiring Tamil, and at the same time ministering to Germans, to half-caste "Portuguese," and to slaves. Added to these four activities, came also a fifth, to which Ziegenbalg attached great importance—the establishment of the first Mission Boarding School, the precursor of thousands of similar institutions throughout India in later days. With Ziegenbalg it was a purely charity school, maintained entirely at the cost of the missionaries, who declared themselves ready to receive and feed and train as many children as might be given into their care. The burden was a heavy one for their small resources, but the importance of this work was deemed so great as amply to justify it. To capture the children for Christ has ever been a leading aim of missionaries, and Ziegenbalg gave it the emphasis which has been maintained by all later Protestant Missions in India.

"I must not forget to tell you," he wrote after some experience of this work, "that what taketh me most in this affair is the education of children in India. They are of a good and promising temper: and being not yet possessed with so many head-strong prejudices against the Christian faith, they are the sooner wrought upon, and mollified into a sense of the fear of God. To tell you the truth, we look on our youth as a stock or nursery from whence in time plentiful supplies may be drawn for enriching our Malabar Church with such numbers as will prove a glory and ornament to the Christian profession."

Four months after the missionaries' arrival in Tranquebar they began the instruction of catechumens, and on 12th May, 1707, after ten months' residence, the firstfruits were gathered in. On that day of heartening five adult "heathen" slaves were baptized. They were however of the "Portuguese" community, and presumably, prior to Ziegenbalg's arrival, had some slight acquaintance with Christianity, and probably were more accessible to Christian influences than were the pure natives. Yet, even so, careful preparation had been insisted on. For six months two hours' instruction was given to them daily, and only then were they judged fit to be baptized. Undue haste in baptizing was never a fault with these pioneers.

The baptisms led to another notable development. So great was the increase of interest aroused, that the attendance at the services held in the mission house grew quite beyond the capacity of the largest room. Ziegenbalg resolved to build a church, and with him to resolve ever meant to act. On 14th June, 1707, the foundation-stone was laid, and in spite of official jeers and opposition, exactly two months later the building was completed. It was a red-letter day in the history of Indian Christianity, for that church declared to all that Protestant Missions had come to stay, and that the truth of God as held by Reformed Christendom was henceforth to be shared with India. To Ziegenbalg and Plütschau the day was perhaps the glad-

dest in all their life, and the joy and hope of their hearts may be seen in the buoyant message which Ziegenbalg sent home:—

“In the name of God, and in hopes of being supported by our King we laid the foundation of a church, bestowing thereon all whatever we could possibly spare from our yearly pension. Every one that saw it laughed at it as a silly and rash design, and cried us down for sots venturing too boldly upon a thing which they thought would certainly come to nothing. However we prosecuted our design in the name of God, a friend sending fifty rix-dollars towards it. By this forwardness of our work our enemies were confounded, and some of them did then contribute something themselves towards accomplishing the whole affair: which proved no small comfort to us. Thus is the building finished at last, and fitted up for a church congregation. It lies without the town in the midst of a multitude of Malabarians, near the high road, built all of stone. It was consecrated the fourteenth of August, which was the eighth Sunday after Trinity, in the presence of a great conflux of heathens, Mohammedans, and Christians, who had a sermon preached to them, both in Portuguese and Malabarick. . . . Multitudes of people flock together to hear us, Malabarians, Blacks, and Christians, every one being allowed to come in, let him be heathen, Mohammedan, Papist, or Protestant. . . . At this rate the work of God runs on amain. Our congregation consists of sixty-three persons, and another is to be baptized to-morrow.”

These figures call attention to the remarkably rapid advance made by the mission. On September 5th, 1707, nine Tamils were baptized, by the end of the year the number had grown to thirty-five, and in 1708, two years after the work began, there were 101 baptized Christians in connection with the mission.



Prosperity brought its own difficulties. With every addition to the work the financial problem developed in seriousness, and how to provide for the children in the schools, pay the native assistants, supply the needed literature, and meet other expenses, was a constant anxiety to the missionaries. For the most part it was met by ever sterner curtailment of their personal expenses, that so they might give more freely to the work. But there were also other difficulties which grew with success. From the natives, and also from their own European countrymen, came steady opposition, but more from the latter than from the former. The Governor's antipathy was a continual irritant, and it reached its height when in 1708, on a trifling pretext, Ziegenbalg was seized and thrown into prison for four weary months. Here he suffered much hardship. Even pen and paper were for a time denied him, and all intercourse with his friends outside was refused. Yet he endured all uncomplainingly and when, on his release, he set himself anew to the work of his heart he was cheered by a whole series of encouragements. Both natives and Europeans showed him real sympathy, and furnished him with financial aid sufficient to tide over the time until supplies should arrive from home. The converts multiplied, one important accession which greatly rejoiced Ziegenbalg's heart being that of a gifted Tamil poet, Kanabadi Vathiar, whose powers were at once utilised in the service of the mission. The story of Christ and the

messages of the Gospel were thrown by him into verse, and when wedded to native music were readily learned and sung by the children. And added to these gladdening experiences was the arrival in 1709 of reinforcements from home, both in money and men. With part of the money a mission-house was bought, large enough for the increased staff, and with three additional comrades to help in the work Ziegenbalg looked forward to great things. Of the three, Gründler was to prove a tower of strength in the days when Ziegenbalg should be taken; Jordan, not yet ordained, was also to be of real service; but Bövingh was soon to show himself by his narrowness and obstinacy a most hurtful accession to the staff. When it is said that the Governor gave him his backing, the unfortunate choice of Bövingh as a missionary is declared. But of these future developments Ziegenbalg had no suspicion, and 1709 closed as a year of success, rejoicing, and hope.

#### IV.

In little over two years Ziegenbalg had established in Tranquebar a firm base of missionary operations, and throughout his Indian career he was assiduous in fostering and developing the life of the local church and schools and the Christian community whom they served. But his ultimate goal was much more than a Christian Tranquebar: it was a *Christian India*. Tranquebar was but the base: that

once secured he planned the wider conquest, and by the methods which he adopted gave expression for the first time to a distinctive aim which has largely influenced Reformed Missions. With Roman Missions in India and elsewhere, the main objective has generally been to establish the Christian Church as a strong organisation in the land, the workers holding that with the Church thus rooted in the soil, the gaining of the people might be regarded as in time assured. Accordingly in India, for a century and a half, they had striven to organise a Christian Church, and were moderately satisfied when natives of the country accepted the Church's seal of baptism, and came within her pale: deeper things were left to follow. With Protestant Missions, from Ziegenbalg onwards, this order of endeavour has not been so prominent. A Christian India has been the supreme goal, in attaining which the upbuilding of a Christian Church has been viewed as a natural concomitant and most valuable aid. But to win the heart of India for Christ has been the great endeavour.

This contrast between Roman and Reformed Missions must not be pushed too far, especially in the present day, when Reformed Missions, without in the least resiling from the wider ideal, are devoting increased attention to organising the Indian Church on lines that make for strength and permanence. Yet in the main the contrast holds good, and in this respect Ziegenbalg was a true pioneer and representative of later Protestant missionaries. A Chris-

tian India was his dream. To gain not merely the outward allegiance of her people to the Church, but to capture for Christ their heart and mind and will was his deepest desire and highest aim. Hence came the prolonged catechumenate demanded of his converts: theirs must be a reasoned and a reasonable faith. Hence came also recurring endeavours to widen his base, and by frequent tours strengthen his touch with the Indian people, and perfect his knowledge of their thought and needs. Hence too his persistent efforts in these tours to influence the European settlers along the coast and so make them, in turn, influences for Christ. In these tours he travelled north as far as Madras, where the English settlers and the English chaplain gave him a cordial welcome, and west to the native kingdom of Tanjore. There however he met with a repulse, being informed that the Rajah had no place in his territory for "the Christian-maker of Tranquebar".

Of the lines of operation adopted by Ziegenbalg, with the Christianising of India as his goal, three were specially distinctive, and of these two are diligently followed still. These lines were: public conferences on religion, the preparation and circulation of good Christian literature, and the translation of the Bible into the vernacular. In each of these methods Ziegenbalg was the pioneer of modern Indian Missions. Of his public conferences with representative Hindus, which were not infrequent

and were invariably characterised by much courtesy on both sides, the most famous was one held at Negapatam, under the auspices of the Dutch authorities. There, for five hours, in the presence of a great audience of Hindus, the Christian missionary and a leading Brahman contended for their respective faiths. By common consent they agreed to leave out of consideration their sacred books, and to argue on principles of pure reason and make the appeal to conscience. It was not difficult for Ziegenbalg to prove the unreasonableness of polytheism and idolatry, but the conscience of his opponents did not follow the conquest of their reason, and their quickness in evading logical conclusions, and delivering return thrusts at some weakness in the exposition of the Christian position, evoked Ziegenbalg's frank admiration. He derived, he said, very little help from the treatises written by learned men in Europe on the way to convert heathens.

"Well may they write on this subject while they argue with themselves only, and fetch both the objections and the answers from their own stock. Should they come to a closer converse with the pagans, and hear their shifts and evasions themselves, they would not find them so destitute of argument as we imagine. They are able to baffle, now and then, one proof alleged for Christianity with ten others brought against it. . . . It requires an experimental wisdom to convey a saving knowledge into their mind, and to convince them of the folly of heathenism and of the *truth* of Christianity."

A short experience however of this particular missionary method convinced Ziegenbalg of its

inutility. Public conferences were found by him, as by many in later times, to result in dialectic display and little more. Their very publicity hindered any acknowledgment by his Hindu opponents of their being touched by the missionary's argument, and soon this method of reaching the soul of India was laid aside.

It was otherwise with Ziegenbalg's two remaining methods. By Christian literature and by the Holy Scriptures, the reader's mind and heart and conscience were assailed by forces, free from any spectacular distraction, and secretly but effectively the attack was pressed home. From the first this indefatigable man set himself to master the intricacies of the language, and to grasp the contents of the religion of the people whom he wished to convert, and his own prolific output of literature was evidence of his success. Primers for use in the schools were among his earliest efforts, Luther's *Short Catechism*, a brief *Life of Christ*, and the Danish *Liturgy*. To these were added by degrees, a *Statement of the Christian, Jewish, Mohammedan and Pagan Religions*, a book of *Hymns*, an elementary compendium of *Theology*, and other similar works. Most useful of all for succeeding missionaries was his *Malabarick Dictionary*, a truly great work, in which the words were arranged in three columns, the first giving the Tamil word, the second its pronunciation in Roman characters, and the third the meaning of the word in German. Of the earliest

form of this dictionary Ziegenbalg says: "It contains above 20,000 words, all writ on leaves, and is designed to be transcribed on paper and to be printed in time for the benefit of the mission". The pierced leaves of the Palmyra palm were for long his substitute for the printed page. His other literary *magnum opus* was a book of great value, *The Genealogy of the Deities of Malabar*, but it is with shame that one records that it remained in manuscript for one hundred and fifty years, being first published in 1867.

Yet, busy though Ziegenbalg was in general authorship, his main effort as a scholar concentrated on the translation of the Bible. He realised that his special task in India was to lay foundations that would endure, and as the surest means of securing this he decided to give to the people the Bible in their own language. In October, 1708, he began this supreme task, and within three years the New Testament was completed. For the first time in the history of India, her people had the Word of God in one of their own vernaculars. What the Nestorian missionaries had not done in one thousand years, what the Roman missionaries in three hundred years had never dreamed of attempting, was accomplished by this young missionary when not yet six years in the country. Naturally the Tamil he wrote was not of the highest order, and the Roman Catholic Beschi flung many a sneer at the translator and his work, but it was "understanded of the

people," and sufficed to open to them the revealed Word of God.

## V.

In modern times an important part of the work of the foreign missionary is to educate the Home Base,—to keep it informed as to the progress of the work in the field, develop its sympathy and interest, stimulate its zeal, and secure increasingly its active co-operation. In this department also Ziegenbalg was a notable pioneer, and if even to-day this educative work may not be neglected without hurt falling on the mission, two hundred years ago it was yet more imperative. The home base of that day could hardly be said to exist, so limited was its area. The Danish King, and a few earnest men in Denmark, and more especially in Germany, who were rich in faith but poor in material wealth,—these comprised it all. The Church, whether in Denmark or Germany, furnished as yet no base for Foreign Missions. The flame still waited for the kindling, and by applying the torch Ziegenbalg rendered one of his greatest services to the missionary cause.

A variety of considerations urged him to maintain close touch with home. Some reports of what he and his comrade were doing were naturally expected by those who had sent them forth, and to Dr. Lützens such accounts were carefully transmitted. But apart altogether from considerations of



duty it was a pure joy to the missionaries to write to their friends at home and tell them of their work, their difficulties, and their progress. They craved sympathy and they needed help. So from the earliest days in Tranquebar Ziegenbalg was a diligent foreign correspondent with the home base. Letters containing full accounts of his doings, and packed with information regarding the country and its people, were regularly transmitted by him to his old teacher, and Pietist leader, Francke. These were circulated throughout Germany and Denmark, and roused much interest as well as evoking financial help. When translated into English, and circulated in England, they proved even more effective as a missionary stimulus. This was the happy service rendered by the Rev. M. Boehm, the Danish chaplain of Prince George of Denmark, the consort of Queen Anne. Boehm published the first collection of letters in 1709, and a second in 1710, dedicating both to the Archbishop of Canterbury and other members of the lately born Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Quaint in style and unpretentious in appearance is the little volume containing these letters, and the selection is not numerous. The letters are all contained in 100 small pages, but the title of the booklet makes up by its length for the brevity of the contents :—

*“ Propagation of the Gospel in the East : being an account of the Success of Two Danish Missionaries, lately sent to the East*

*Indies, for the Conversion of the Heathens in Malabar. In several Letters to their Correspondents in Europe containing,—*

“A narrative of their Voyage to the Coast of *Coromandel*, their Settlement at *Tranquebar*, the Divinity and Philosophy of the *Malabarians*, their Language and Manners, the Impediments obstructing their Conversion, the several Methods taken by these Missionaries, the wonderful Providences attending them, and the Progress they have already made.

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“Rendered into English from the High Dutch.”

As the first epistles to the Home Churches ever written by Indian missionaries of the Reformed faith, these letters of Ziegenbalg will always possess a unique value. The complete collection in German is naturally of primary worth, but the selection done into English, and dedicated in 1709 to the Most Honourable Corporation for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, is sufficiently illustrative of the whole, and was of excellent service at the time. The Society was greatly moved by the boldness and importance of the enterprise and the devotion of the missionaries, and forwarded to *Tranquebar* a contribution of £20, accompanied by a case of books and an appreciative letter. The gift does not impress one by its magnitude, but it is intensely interesting as being the first contribution to Indian Missions ever made by an English society. Later contributions followed, and when Ziegenbalg's letter of grateful acknowledgment was received the interest in England rose higher. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel found, however, that in help-

ing the work in Tranquebar they were transgressing their constitution, which limited them to work in *British* colonies; so their interest in Ziegenbalg and his work was transferred to the sister Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Under this society the English fostering of the Danish mission was maintained and increased. Ziegenbalg and Plütschau were elected corresponding members of the S.P.C.K., a small annual grant of money was voted, in the beginning of 1711 a consignment of 250 Portuguese New Testaments was despatched in one of the ships of the East India Fleet, and, most prized of all, in the same ship went a printing press, a supply of paper, and a printer, Jonas Finck.

These were great results to flow from the diligence of the foreign correspondent, but unfortunately all the gifts did not reach their destination. The vessel was captured by a French privateer off Brazil, and most of the cargo was confiscated. The New Testaments vanished, but the printing press and the paper were left. Ultimately the ship was ransomed and resumed her voyage, but ere India was reached Jonas Finck had died, and it was only the printing press and the paper that in August, 1712, arrived at Tranquebar. Fortunately among the Danish soldiers in Tranquebar there was found a man who had been trained as a printer, and his services being obtained, the press was set to work. A primer in Portuguese for the school and a treatise on *The Way of Salvation* were the first productions,—“the first fruits,” wrote

Ziegenbalg, "of the Word of God bestowed on the Heathen by their friends in England". A year later, 1713, a second printing press was received, this time a gift from friends in Germany, and along with it a fount of Tamil type, which had been produced by a skilful young German craftsman after a careful study of the Tamil letters. Accompanied by his brother he went with the press to Tranquebar, and without delay the printing of the Tamil New Testament was begun. In September, 1714, the four Gospels were printed, and in circulation, a notable event for the Christianising of Southern India.

By this time Ziegenbalg had been eight years in India. They had been years of strenuous and unceasing work, of many trying experiences, and of constant strain on the worker's health. In 1711 his true yoke-fellow Plütschau had been compelled to return to Europe, the physical strain having in his case proved so intense that any return to India was for him impossible. In Europe, however, Plütschau had rendered timely and valuable service by neutralising the hurtful influence of Bövingh, the malcontent, who had also returned to Denmark, and whose misleading reports as to the mission demanded and received prompt contradiction. Accompanied by a Tamil convert, Plütschau toured through Germany and England, creating much interest in both countries, particularly in England, in consequence of which increased aid began to find its way to Tranquebar. Ziegenbalg was greatly cheered, and planned opera-

tions on a larger scale. A great mission, whose operations should extend from Madras to Ceylon, under the united care of the Universities of Germany, Denmark and Holland, was one of his visions: and there were others. But first was needed a brief rest for the wearied worker. Body, mind and spirit all cried out for refreshment, and in October, 1714, Ziegenbalg sailed for Europe, taking with him a young native, Maleiappen, a visible evidence of the fruit which the missionaries were gathering, and at the same time a useful assistant to Ziegenbalg in perfecting his dictionary and in translating the Old Testament, to which work he devoted himself on the voyage. As the vessel sailed away from Tranquebar the heart of the great missionary must have known no ordinary rejoicing, when he thought on the things that God had wrought in these short eight years, and contrasted the conditions now prevailing with those which faced him and his companion when they had stood alone in the city-square, destitute, despised, and forsaken of all men. Then there had been no native Christians save those connected with the Roman Mission: now he was leaving behind him 221 baptized Christians, twenty-six catechumens preparing for baptism, five charity schools with seventy-eight children in attendance, a church and a mission-house, the nucleus of a Christian literature in the Tamil language thirty-two works of greater or less importance having been issued, and, above all, the Gospels already circulating in the language of

the people, with the complete New Testament soon to follow. Verily it was with no tale of missionary failure that this pioneer of modern Indian Missions journeyed home.

## VI.

On 1st June, 1715, after an eight months' voyage, Ziegenbalg arrived in Europe and hastened to report himself to his royal patron, the King of Denmark. Good old Dr. Lütken was by this time dead, and the royal interest in the Mission at Tranquebar was in danger of being swamped by nearer cares. Denmark, with Prussia as an ally, was at war with Sweden, and King Frederick was in the camp of the allied forces besieging Stralsund. So to Stralsund Ziegenbalg hastened. "There," writes Dr. Fleming Stevenson, "one evening a stranger of note had an audience with the King, who had shown him singular favour, and for hours, it was said, they had been closeted together. The soldiers who had gathered round may have been disappointed when they saw that he was only a clergyman; a man indeed of commanding presence, of a wonderful dignity and fire, resolute and calm, with a keen eye, a bronzed and almost swarthy face, seamed with deep lines of care, and a winning courtesy and loveliness of manner: but when he opened his lips and preached to them, and they heard it was young Mr. Ziegenbalg, the missionary from Tranquebar, there were some at least who ceased to wonder at his welcome."

He seemed to have dropped out of the clouds, the mission had no time to spare, but he got his story told to the King, and he was content: for details he was referred to Copenhagen."

The King was entirely sympathetic and continued to be actively helpful. Indeed a year prior to Ziegenbalg's return steps had been taken, with the royal approval, to establish the home base on a more permanent footing, and a Missionary Board or committee of management had been created, with its headquarters at Copenhagen. Of this board Ziegenbalg was appointed by the King the first Provost, and for a time at least the Tranquebar Mission was directed from home by the man best qualified to do it. All official hostility in the field was by the King's order brought to an end, Governor Hassius was recalled, and a successor appointed whose friendliness to the mission was assured. The arrangements at Copenhagen having been satisfactorily settled, a tour by the missionary through Denmark and Germany followed, and wherever he spoke keen interest in the man and in his mission was awakened. To Ziegenbalg this was all cause of deep gratification and growing hopefulness, but particularly refreshing to him was the daily touch with kindred souls which he now enjoyed. It was a spiritual refreshing such as he greatly needed. Pleasing too it is to read of his marriage which now took place. In Tranquebar, neither thought nor opportunity of marriage had been possible, and of the quiet home

life in the mission-house, which has been to many a hard-worked missionary in the field a priceless restorative, Ziegenbalg had no experience. But, when on furlough, he found sufficient leisure to think of these things, and to woo and win a wife. Dorothea Saltzmann, daughter of a Government official at Merseburg, was the lady. When Ziegenbalg left for India, eight years before, she was but a school-girl, and as tutor in her school her future husband must have known her. Now on his return he found her a woman, strong, cultured, and religious, and willing to face the unknown life in India with the man she loved. It was a happy marriage for both.

After his marriage the missionary and his young wife proceeded to England, and paid a visit which proved of much moment to the mission,—and to England. Nothing could exceed the heartiness of the reception given to the now famous missionary. On all sides sympathy abounded. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London showed deep interest in the work in India; the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge presented him with an address and twenty guineas, and assured him of its continued interest and aid: and by King George I., and the Prince and Princess of Wales, a special interview was accorded. It was all a real stimulus to Ziegenbalg, who often afterwards referred to his reception in “generous England”. But India claimed him and he was eager to return; so,



on 4th March, 1716, the young couple sailed, reaching Madras on 19th August, and proceeding thence to Tranquebar. His furlough had been a time of pure joy and abundant encouragement, yet to-day one realises how sadly inadequate was its duration, and how painfully lacking it must have been in restfulness. The long voyages home and back again furnished indeed grateful periods of quiet; but in Europe, with its bracing climatic influences, only nine months were spent, and these were months of incessant activity and continual excitement. Such a furlough, after eight years of unbroken residence on the plains of India and of unremitting labour, was, as the event proved, quite insufficient to equip the jaded worker for the fresh period of duty to which he now returned.

## VII.

During Ziegenbalg's absence from the field there had been no falling back. Under the able and devoted Gründler, the ground already won had been maintained, and fresh advances made. The Christian community had increased, a new charity school had been opened, and was attended by seventy pupils, and preparations for the erection of a new church, adequate in size for the enlarged congregations, were far advanced. On Ziegenbalg's return this important undertaking was pushed on apace. On 9th February, 1717, the foundation-stone of the new church was laid by the Governor of the settlement,

and on 11th October, amid great rejoicing, the church was consecrated, and opened for divine service. To it was given the name of the earlier building whose place it took—“*New Jerusalem*,” and with its spacious proportions and inspiring history it remains to-day the object of leading interest in Tranquebar. In 1849 it was visited by Dr. Duff, and the record of the emotions of one great missionary on visiting the scene of another’s labours is deeply interesting.

“The Church,” wrote Dr. Duff, “is built in the form of a cross, each wing being of equal size. If the centre had a dome, instead of an ordinary roof, it might seem after the model of St. Paul’s, London, on a small scale. The pulpit is at one of the centre corners, so as to be seen from every part of the building. I mounted the pulpit: and with no ordinary emotion gazed around from the position from which Ziegenbalg, and Gründler, and Schwartz so often proclaimed a free salvation to thousands in Tamil, German, Danish, and Portuguese. At the end of one of the wings on either side of a plain altar, lie the mortal remains of Ziegenbalg and Gründler. I stood with not easily expressed feelings over the remains of two such men, of brief but brilliant and immortal career in the mighty work of Indian evangelisation. Theirs was a lofty and indomitable spirit, breathing the most fervid piety.”

But other developments than church-building claimed and received Ziegenbalg’s attention in those closing years of his brief and fervid life, and of these none was more important than the establishment, in 1716, of a training institution for native Christian teachers and preachers. With eight pupils a hopeful beginning in this absolutely essential work was made. Two out-stations in the narrow limits of the Danish

settlement were opened, with a missionary in temporary charge of each: and pushing still farther afield a school was begun at Cuddalore, and another at Madras, the latter being at the request of the English Governor and the chaplain, and forming the first step taken by the British towards the Christian education of India. And all the time these advances were being arranged and carried out, the literary work of the indefatigable missionary never languished. His great dictionary was finally completed, and by 1719 his translation of the Old Testament had reached as far as the Book of Ruth.

It was a period of rapid progress along many lines, and encouragement from many sides was not wanting: especially was this so with the mission's friends in England. To King George, Ziegenbalg soon after his return had sent an account of the mission's progress, and from the King a gracious reply was forwarded, "To the reverend and learned Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, and John Ernest Gründler, Missionaries at Tranquebar". From the Archbishop of Canterbury as President of the S.P.C.K. went a letter of superlative appreciation and recognition, as may be judged from the following paragraph:—

"Let others indulge in a ministry, if not idle, certainly less laborious, among Christians at home: let them enjoy in the bosom of the Church, titles and honours, obtained without labour or without danger: your praise it will be (a praise of endless duration on earth and followed by a just recompense in heaven) to have laboured in the vineyard which yourselves have planted, to have declared the name of Christ

where it was not known before : and through such peril and difficulty, to have converted to the faith those among whom ye afterward fulfilled your ministry. Your province therefore, Brethren, your office, I place before all dignities in the Church."

By the time this letter reached Tranquebar, the earthly labours of Ziegenbalg had ended, but his sorrowing comrades were cheered by the cordial message. By the end of 1718 the sands of the pioneer's life were running out, and their passage was hastened by other causes than his over-strenuous activities. To these there was added trouble of a kind that has embittered the lives of not a few missionaries since his day—needless friction with the home authorities. The Mission Board at Copenhagen received a new chairman named Wendt, a man godly and sincere but of hopelessly narrow outlook. He succumbed to the influences of Bövingh, and Ziegenbalg with his statesmanlike methods and wide-stretching aims became suspect. To Wendt it seemed that the simple and apostolic methods were being entirely forsaken. The securing of a stable base with church and schools and training institution, the mastering of the literature and religions of the natives, the provision of a varied Christian literature, and the diffusion of much general knowledge,—these aims and methods were frowned upon, and in their stead Ziegenbalg and his colleagues were bidden copy the Apostles, embrace poverty, and go out two and two preaching to the people the simple Gospel. Ziegenbalg was pierced to the very heart. It needed his

death and that of the like-minded Gröndler to bring the Home Board to confess its cruel folly, and revert to the ways of the men it had sacrificed, but the evil had been done, and the shame will ever abide. It is however true that, apart from this bitter experience, Ziegenbalg's life could not have been much prolonged. He lived too intensely for length of days to be his. Like a later missionary he "burned out for God," being one who while the day lasted could not other than work, and who in perfect faith left it to God to say when the day should end and the night close in.

It began to close in October, 1718, when the malady attacked him which was ultimately to prove fatal. Medical skill procured him a short respite, and on Christmas Day and again on New Year's Day, he was able to preach in his beloved church. But the effort was more than he was fit for, and after making it his strength ebbed rapidly away. On 23rd February, 1719, the end came. Reminded, as he lay dying, of the Apostle Paul's longing to be with Christ, he ejaculated, "So do I long too!" Then at intervals came broken fragments of sentences that told the thoughts of the passing saint. "I can hardly speak more . . ." "May God bless what I have spoken, that it bring forth fruit . . ." "I have daily given myself into Thy hands, O God . . ." "The Lord saith, Father, I will that where I am there also shall my servant be". Then, shading his eyes with his hand, he cried out, "How is it so bright, as if

the sun shone in my face!" A few moments of quiet rapture followed, and then the last request, inexpressibly touching in its holy calm and beauty, "Sing," he said,

"Jesus, meine Zuversicht,  
Und mein Heiland ist im Leben,"

—the old hymn, learned long years before as a boy in his Saxon village home, and his favourite ever since. To the soft music of a violin the words were sung, so full of Christian hope in death and assurance of heavenly joy. A great peace shone on his face as he listened, and quietly, without a murmur, he was gathered in the Everlasting Arms.

### VIII.

When Ziegenbalg died he was only thirty-six, and his years of labour in India numbered scarce thirteen. Yet the work he accomplished in that short time, and the legacy he bequeathed to the country of his adoption, were of rare richness. It is indeed in the legacy that the interest and importance of his life is best revealed. His mere biography is not nearly so stirring in its episodes as are the life histories of India's earlier apostles, nor is his work in the field marked by much picturesqueness. Its record is one of the steady development of prosaic details, and inasmuch as similar details form the body of every Mission Report that is received to-day, they are liable to be read without the mind being sufficiently awake to their meaning. Schools,

churches, catechising, mission seminaries, Bible translation—these are the commonplaces of Mission work now. Yes, and that is why they redound so greatly to the praise of Ziegenbalg, for it was he who made them, for India, a commonplace. He discovered the methods now so universal: he laid down the lines on which his successors through the length and breadth of India have worked. It is true there have been many developments as the long years have passed. But except on one point there has been no abandonment of the main methods of missionary work adopted first by Bartholomew Ziegenbalg.

The exception concerns his attitude to Caste, and his practical treatment of that problem in the infant Church at Tranquebar. In this matter he was heavily handicapped by two circumstances. The Roman missionaries had carried the recognition of caste to an extreme, thus prejudicing the native mind as to the pliability of the Christian religion in this connection, and making it difficult for the first Protestant missionaries to adopt a radically different position. And, further, these same missionaries were, at the start, entirely ignorant as to the true meaning and importance of caste, and lacked that experience of its evils which has led later Protestant Missions, with the single exception of the Leipsic Mission, to give it no quarter whatever in the Christian Church. In the Church planted by the Danish Mission the caste troubles did not seriously develop until after Ziegenbalg's time, but it was un-

doubtedly his qualified recognition of caste distinctions which ultimately bore most noxious fruit. In the church at Tranquebar separate places were assigned to the Sudras and to the Pariahs. They sat apart, and at the celebration of the Holy Communion, the Sudras, women as well as men, approached the Table before the Pariahs. This was the one serious mistake which the great pioneer committed: and while all must regret his error, it should not be forgotten that it is the sight of the consequences of that error which has made it easy for later workers to discern the evil and avoid it. In every other respect the methods introduced by Ziegenbalg have continued, in their essential features, to be followed by Protestant Missions in India to the present hour.

Fully as important as the discovery and application of right methods of mission work, was the exhibition Ziegenbalg gave to India of the new motive underlying the work. He reached India at a time when the name of Christian missionary was an offence to the Hindus—and justly so. The shameful deceits and artifices adopted by the priests of the Jesuit Madura Mission had been laid bare before the Hindu world. A Christian missionary had become synonymous with a worker in trickery and make-believe, while the act of becoming a Christian had been identified with a mere ceremonial, of whose meaning those operated on were mostly ignorant.

It was left to Ziegenbalg to restore respect for



the missionary and to impart a deeper meaning to his work. And this he did. His transparent goodness and honesty gained him the liking of the Hindus throughout the whole district, and in seeking to win them to the Christian fold he was openness itself. Not by any dark mystic rite were converts "made," but by full explanation of the Gospel their minds as well as their hearts were sought for Christ. The translating of the Bible into their own tongue, the open frank discussions on religion, the long preparation insisted on before baptism was administered, were all marks of a new missionary ideal. It was the ideal of Protestantism as contrasted with that of Romanism—at least of the Romanism of that day—and for the clear exposition of the change no better man could have been found than Ziegenbalg. The first of a long line of able missionaries from Protestant lands, he was an admirable exponent of the Protestant spirit, and of all who have come after him there is not one but confesses his greatness, and thanks God for his work. Aye, and many besides missionaries make the same confession, for the type which we see in Ziegenbalg appeals to every heart,—a man devoted to his Master and wholeheartedly given to the Master's work, of zeal unbounded and of faith unquenchable, a man whose work will never die, and who, by the intensity of his life and the greatness of his service, well merits the name of honour that has been given him, "The Morning Star of Modern Indian Missions".

## CHAPTER VIII

CHRISTIAN FRIEDERICH SCHWARTZ

(1726-1797)

ONE day in late October in the year 1726, at the small Prussian town of Sonnenberg, there took place an episode which has since become permanently enshrined in the traditions of Indian Missions. A pious German woman there lay dying, and before she should pass away she summoned to her bedside her husband and her pastor, to hear her last request. Then taking her infant son in her arms, like a second Hannah she solemnly dedicated him to the Lord, and made her husband promise that if in after years the boy should exhibit any desire for the work of the ministry, the desire would be fostered and helped to its fulfilment. Seventy years later the child who was thus consecrated to God's service breathed his last in far away Tanjore, in Southern India, closing a life of richly varied usefulness and rare Christian power, for it was the life of *Christian Friederich Schwartz*.

The steps that led Schwartz to adopt a missionary career were few, but well marked. His mother's

dedication, followed as it was by the care of a like-minded father, imparted a serious and earnest tone to the boy's earlier years. Then Halle University, with its strongly spiritual influences, decided his choice of the ministry: and by a very unusual association, into which he was thrown when at Halle, the field of his life's activity was definitely settled.

Schultze, the successor of Ziegenbalg at Tranquebar, after twenty-three years' service in South India had been obliged to return home, and having settled at Halle was engaged at the time in seeing a new edition of the Tamil New Testament through the press. The ripe missionary and the eager young student met, and between the two an intimacy and mutual appreciation rapidly developed. Schultze was in need of help in his literary work, and finding that Schwartz was willing to give it, he began to teach him the Tamil language. Thus was completed the chain that bound Sonnenberg to Tranquebar. With the study of the Tamil language there went also instruction as to the Tamil people, and a quickening interest in their welfare: and when a little later Schwartz was invited to join the Tranquebar Mission, he had no hesitation in agreeing. His father's consent having been obtained, the young missionary proceeded to Denmark, the headquarters of the Mission, was ordained by the Danish Bishop Horreboa, and travelling through England, arrived at Tranquebar on 30th July, 1750—when not yet twenty-four years of age. Thus began the

great career which was to run unbroken for forty-seven long years. Schwartz gave himself to India, and never, so far as his letters show, did he cherish any longing to return to his native land. India became his country, and there he lived and laboured and died.

## I.

Thirty-one years separate the death of Ziegenbalg from the arrival of Schwartz, and in that time the developments of the Tranquebar Mission had been remarkable. After Ziegenbalg there had come a succession of missionaries, not all able and not all wise, yet in the main pious, earnest, and devoted men: and, in the case of not a few, well worthy of having their names associated with that of the great pioneer. Such were Schultze, the leader of the mission after Gründler's death, Kohlhoff the elder, and Fabricius, who in 1742 succeeded Schultze in the charge of the work at Madras, and there carried through his great contribution to the Christian Church of South India, his admirable Tamil version of the Bible. The number of missionaries in the field varied from time to time, never being higher than eight and seldom less than four, and with this continuity of workers missionary methods in Tranquebar had assumed the regularity of a system. School work as well as ordinary church work was well attended to, but the main occupations of the missionaries were careful instruction of the

catechumens, and regular evangelistic itineration throughout the district. Never a year passed without some hundreds of natives being baptized, the preparation of whom was especially the work of the younger missionaries, while itineration devolved more largely on the senior workers. On foot and usually in pairs, or sometimes singly accompanied by a catechist, the missionaries journeyed up and down the countryside conversing readily with all whom they chanced to meet, rich or poor, Brahman or Pariah, boldly rebuking the false and declaring the true. Mostly men of humble origin and unaccustomed to luxuries, they lived simply and worked faithfully, and had their reward in the marked growth of the Christian community. By the time Schwartz arrived the native Christian community, which when Ziegenbalg died had numbered 355, had increased to some 8000, no fewer than 11,000 having been baptized during the six and forty years of the mission's history. Two native pastors had been ordained, numbers of qualified catechists were dispersed throughout the country, operations had extended far beyond the limits of Tranquebar, numerous other centres were regularly visited, and in some cases had missionaries permanently attached. Of these "out-stations" the most important were Madras, Cuddalore, Tanjore, Trichinopoly and Negapatam. The dreams of Ziegenbalg were in process of being realised. A far-flung line of Christian agencies was making the South-East of India familiar with

Christian ideals, and Christian congregations dotted over a wide area gave promise of the speedy formation of an Indian Church.

Such was the field on which Schwartz now entered—widely different from that in which Ziegenbalg had begun his labours. The pioneer work was done, and better done than probably Schwartz could have accomplished it; for with all his excellent qualities it may be doubted if he had those most essential in a pioneer. In his long years of service he devised no new missionary methods, struck out no novel lines of action, but faithfully and diligently worked on the lines already laid down, and pushed forward the work in new areas by methods already recognised. He was not a Ziegenbalg, but neither was Ziegenbalg a Schwartz, and the remarkable developments achieved by the calm steady labours of the later missionary were such as his impetuous fore-runner could hardly have secured. Each had his own place, and the work needed both.

As was the case with many missionaries in those earlier days, Schwartz became of real use to the mission in a wonderfully brief period, his preliminary study of Tamil under Schultze at Halle proving of great benefit. In this Schwartz's experience supplies a strong argument for those who to-day urge that intending missionaries should begin the study of the language of their chosen field while still at home, and thereby shorten the irksome period of com-

pulsory inactivity after their arrival on the field. Within four months after he reached Tranquebar Schwartz preached his first Tamil sermon. He had been afraid of the pronunciation proving a stumbling-block, but his fears were baseless. "After we had once preached," he wrote, "it became more and more easy." Yet, he left nothing to chance, and with a diligence worthy of Ziegenbalg, made the mastery of Tamil his serious business. Writing home he says :—

"Soon after the commencement of the new year, I began a catechetical hour in the Tamul or Malabar School, with the youngest lambs: and thus I learned to stammer with them. At the same time I made almost daily excursions and spoke with Christians and heathens, though as may be easily conceived, poorly and falteringly. However God helped me from day to day."<sup>1</sup>

To a colloquial knowledge of the language he added a growing understanding of the religion of the people. Of his efforts to secure this his friend Mr. Chambers has left definite record:—

"Mr. Schwartz deeming it necessary, in order to converse with advantage with these people (the Hindus), to be well acquainted with their system of theology, whatever it was, spent five years, after he had attained some proficiency in their language, in reading their mythological books only. Hard and irksome as this task must have been to a devout mind, he has reaped this benefit from it, that he can at any time command the attention of the Malabars by allusions to their

<sup>1</sup> This and subsequent quotations are taken from Pearson's *Life of Schwartz*.

favourite books and histories, which he never fails to make subservient to the truth."

Evidently he had a natural talent for languages, for to Tamil he added later a thorough knowledge of English, Portuguese, and Persian (the official language of the India of that day), these acquirements widening greatly his sphere of usefulness. But it was not any exceptional ability that made Schwartz's career so notable or his work so effective: his success was primarily a triumph of character. Quiet but earnest in his manner, humble and frugal in his habits, kind, cheerful and sensible in his intercourse with men, transparently honest and absolutely unselfish in every word and work, he won his way into the confidence and the affection of the Indian people to a degree very rarely paralleled.

His life falls naturally into three sections, corresponding to the three centres from which he worked—Tranquebar, Trichinopoly, and Tanjore—and in a general way it may be said, that each of these three stations saw one particular feature of Schwartz's work emphasised. At Tranquebar he is Schwartz the missionary, pure and simple; at Trichinopoly besides being the missionary he is also Schwartz the military chaplain; and at Tanjore to these two callings he adds a third, and is Schwartz the statesman and the councillor. But whether at Tranquebar, Trichinopoly or Tanjore, he is before all things and through all circumstances, the Ambassador of Christ.



## II.

For the first sixteen years of his Indian career, 1750-1766, Schwartz resided at Tranquebar, and from this centre worked unceasingly along the accepted missionary lines. His uncommon merits and capacity were quickly recognised by his brethren, and before he had been four years in the country they placed him in sole charge of all the mission operations south of the Kaveri River. In that wide-stretching district for twelve years solid and successful results were achieved. It is not however work which seems much in the telling, nor does it kindle great interest when told. The routine of mission work in most Indian districts is so much alike, and nowadays is so generally familiar, that it is enough to say that throughout those sixteen years Schwartz laboured patiently and successfully, and to supplement this general statement with a glance at the daily round. The programme which he diligently followed was that generally adopted by the earlier missionaries. The oversight of schools and the instruction of catechumens occupied the mornings and forenoons, daily instruction through six successive weeks being given to the groups of catechumens, who were brought in relays for this purpose from the surrounding villages. The afternoons and early evening hours were devoted to itinerating and direct evangelising, when village after village was visited, the small scattered groups of Christians

were encouraged, Hindus, Mohammedans and stray Roman Catholics were conversed with, and good seed was freely dropped on soils of varying fertility and promise.

The constant contact with heathenism involved a severe strain on the worker's own spiritual life, and Schwartz was ever careful to guard against any declension there, for his letters reveal how close was the daily touch he maintained with God. From this came the absolute trust in the Divine leading, and the unruffled peace in the worker's heart, which characterised Schwartz all through his life. No less careful was he to maintain the spirit of Christian brotherliness with his comrades, and prevent the uprising of dissensions of any kind. Early in the mission's history Ziegenbalg, with this very aim, had established a weekly conference of the workers.

"The weekly conference," wrote Ziegenbalg, "which we hold every Friday with all the labourers, is of the greatest utility in keeping the mission work in order. For on that day in the forenoon, we pray to God for wisdom and counsel, and each relates how he has been employed, or what has occurred in the congregations and schools, and in the printing and bookbinding offices, and in the private houses. Here everything which might occasion disorder or detriment is adjusted, and those means are adopted which may best promote the general good. The conference being ended, the Portuguese and Tamul assistants make a report of their labours, and of whatever may be wanting, that as far as possible it may be supplied."

For a hundred years this excellent practice was continued: and so convinced was Schwartz of its

utility, that when on extended tours with a brother-missionary, the two were careful to hold a weekly *Colloquium Biblicum* for the good of their own souls, and the unity of their work. These journeys farther afield became more numerous as the fame of the missionary spread, Europeans as well as Indian Christians desiring a visit from the man whose earnest words, wise counsel, and brotherly ways made him everywhere welcome. Madras, Pondicherry and even Ceylon were among the places thus visited, but the main energies of the missionary were directed on the nearer field, and the work told. Never a year passed without substantial and visible progress, additional schools being planted, orphans cared for, catechists trained and posted at new villages, and many converts won. But most important of all, for his future work, was the high repute in which Schwartz came to be held by the people of the district, by Hindus, and Mohammedans quite as much as by the Christians themselves. Everybody liked the kindly cheery stalwart man who went up and down the country year after year, with a good word and a pleasant greeting equally for poor and rich, plain spoken indeed when face to face with sin, yet tender in his dealings with the penitent, and ever exalting the religion of his Lord as the cure for all earth's sorrows.

Of his plain-speaking many examples have been preserved and they help to a clear understanding of the man. In dealing with idolatry or the other

errors and vices of Hinduism he was open and frank to a degree, never beating about the bush or hesitating to call a sin by its true name. Yet seldom was personal offence taken, the sincerity of the speaker and the humility of his life preventing any resentment at words whose truth the hearers often frankly admitted. Hindu sophistry he summarily brushed aside.

“Said a Hindu, ‘Show us any one who has embraced your religion, and has actually been saved, and we will believe you’. To which Schwartz replied, ‘God has given you His word—prove and examine it. Such an evidence as you require is not the appointed way of becoming convinced of the truth: for the devil can transform himself into an angel of light.’”

On another occasion, when he was met with the common assertion as to the basal identity of the God of the Christian and the gods of Hinduism, he first compelled his questioner to admit the impurities and sins attributed to many of his deities, and then:—

“‘By your own confession,’ said Schwartz, ‘these are therefore unworthy of the name of Gods.’ ‘That is true,’ said the Hindu, ‘but if we receive even what is false and think it to be true in our heart, it is done to us according to our faith.’”

“‘How can you adopt,’ answered Schwartz, ‘a sophism, which you yourselves on other occasions reject? You are accustomed to say, “If one write the word *sugar* and then lick his finger, it will not on that account become sweet, though he believe it ever so firmly.”’”

Against idolatry his testimony was unceasing and earnest; nor was it ineffective. At a later period in his life he was once visiting the strongly Hindu city of Kumbakonam, with its two hundred temples where idolatry was rampant. Of this visit he wrote:—

“‘We talked ourselves quite weary with various heathen. When the catechists read to them our Lord’s warning against “false prophets” and said something in explanation, a Brahman declared before all present, “*It is the lust of the eyes and of pleasure, that prevents us from embracing the truth*”. Many bore testimony that this was true.’ On this frank admission Schwartz acutely comments: ‘St. Paul enumerates idolatry among the “works of the flesh” and corrupt nature does indeed derive support from it in more ways than one. If it were only an error of the understanding, the greater number of heathens would already have forsaken it: but being a work of the flesh, and Christianity requiring its crucifixion, they stop there. May Divine power rescue them from it, through Jesus Christ!’”

So the long years passed, crowded with teaching, preaching, conversing and witnessing,—humble, unseen, but faithful work, that forged the intimate bond of understanding and affection between Schwartz and the Hindu people, which in later years made possible his great services to their country and to Christ. They were years of war between the French and the English, and their respective native allies along the Coromandel Coast; but in the neutral territory of Tranquebar the Danish missionaries were left untroubled, and in an atmosphere of peace Schwartz’s powers attained their full maturity.

## III.

From the year 1766 to the year 1778 is the second period in Schwartz's life, when Trichinopoly formed his base, and to his strictly missionary duties he added the work of a military chaplain. As early as 1762 he had begun to pay recurring visits both to Tanjore and Trichinopoly, in the interests of the small group of native Christians found at each of these important cities, and became increasingly impressed with the suitability of Trichinopoly as a centre. With its 30,000 inhabitants, its adjacent famous temple of Seringham, its imposing temple-crowned rock, and its recognised political importance, the city occupied a primary position in South India. As the southern residence of Mahomed Ali, the Nabob of the Carnatic and the ally of the English at Madras, Trichinopoly came within the sweep of English influence and interest, and of this evidence was afforded by the presence of a garrison of British troops. But its political importance alone would not have drawn Schwartz to it as a missionary base: what decided him was its importance as a centre of Hinduism. The place was a stronghold of Brahman influence and power, and as such constituted a standing challenge to the Christian missionary. To give support to the native Christians living there, as well as for carrying on effective aggressive work against the Hindu forces so strongly entrenched, the permanent residence of a

European worker was clearly desirable. Schwartz's intercourse with the British opened the way for the desired step. On his occasional visits to Trichinopoly he had found willing supporters in his work, first in Major Preston and then in Colonel Wood, successive commandants of the British garrison, and had himself taken so hearty an interest in the soldiers and their families that when the troops marched to the siege of Madura, Schwartz had been asked to accompany them and had rendered "signally useful" services—presumably in ministering to the wounded and burying the dead. So the tie between him and the British was strengthened, and in 1766 there resulted his permanent transfer to Trichinopoly. Representations were sent home to the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, as to the great need for a missionary at Trichinopoly and the exceeding suitableness of Schwartz for the post. The society responded, and the consent of the Tranquebar Mission having been obtained, Schwartz was transferred to his new station, as the missionary of this venerable English society.

It was a step of much moment both for Schwartz and for the Missions of South India. Then began his close contact with the British, which continued without either break or single discordant note to the close of his long life, and which did much to familiarise both the British in India and the Churches in Britain with the facts and responsibilities of

Indian Missions. To Schwartz it brought large additions to his daily work in the shape of ministrations to the British troops. Sometimes the propriety of his thus heavily binding himself with duties not strictly missionary, has been questioned: but with a missionary of the spirit of Schwartz, there can never be ground for such question. First and last he was ever a missionary, ever a minister of Christ, and when such is the spirit of the worker experience shows that the labours of the "missionary" and the "chaplain" may be simultaneously carried on, with benefit both to the worker and to his double work.

The heathen around him were always Schwartz's first care, but when he found in the garrison fellow-Europeans becoming practically heathen through lack of religious ordinances and teaching, he recognised a duty not to be neglected. The Madras Government of those days was strangely and culpably careless of the spiritual needs of its servants. South of Madras no chaplain was stationed, no religious services were ever held either for soldiers or civilians, religion was in too many cases entirely neglected, its sanctions disregarded, its duties left unperformed, and there is no disguising or denying the fact that the general tone of European morality was very low. Unwarrantably severe judgments are sometimes passed to-day on the life of Anglo-India, often as unjustified and as uncharitable as they are severe, but the testimonies as to the defec-



tive morality of Anglo-India in the eighteenth century are unimpeachable. Even Schwartz, kind and tolerant as he was, again and again refers to this evil as so pitiful in itself, and so hurtful to the good name and progress of the cause of Christ.

"It is extremely difficult," he writes, "when describing our situation here, to give anyone a just conception of it, without adverting to the profligacy of the Europeans. The great among them aim at nothing but to live in pleasure and to become rich. If not readily successful in the latter object they resort to unjust means, the employment of which hardens the mind to so alarming a degree that they will hear nothing of the word of God, and too frequently plunge into the most frightful infidelity."

How damaging this was to Christian progress may be judged from the many remarks of the natives which Schwartz records. One day, meeting a Hindu in company with a dancing girl, he stopped to talk with them, and told them that no unholy persons shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. "Alas, sir," said the girl, "in that case hardly any European will ever enter it!"—a smart but saddening criticism, based on an accurate knowledge of the life of the Europeans of the time. And the same judgment appears in a remark made by the young Nabob to Schwartz. "Padre," he said, "we always looked on you Europeans as ungodly men, who knew not the use of prayers, till you came among us."

So when Schwartz found opportunity in Trichinopoly for lessening the evil, he gladly faced the

work involved. With the permission and approval of the English commandant he began to hold voluntary services for the soldiers, and from the very start the men attended in large numbers. At first Schwartz's imperfect knowledge of English made him *read* a sermon by some English divine, but soon he was able to use the English tongue freely, and preached with great effect. Over the men and officers alike he gained a remarkable influence, and was as welcome in the officers' mess as in the barrack-room. Fifty years afterwards, the widow of one of those officers, who was then spending the evening of her days in England, wrote of Schwartz :—

“No time can efface the remembrance of that remarkable man ; more than half a century is since gone over my head ; yet his features, his sweetness of temper, and kind and courteous manner, are still before me : his information was great and various, and whether he spoke of religion or of the world, it was delightful to listen to him.”

Through his exertions a garrison church was built, subscribed for largely by the garrison itself, and the Government recognised the value of his work by appointing him chaplain to the troops, and giving him an allowance of 100 rupees per month—all of which he spent on the work of the mission or of the church.

It is from this period in his life that we have the clearest pen-portrait of Schwartz which has been preserved. Written by an intimate friend of his,

Mr. Chambers, a merchant, it lets us see the man as his contemporaries beheld him :—

“Figure to yourself,” writes Mr. Chambers, “a stout well-made man, somewhat above the middle size, erect in his carriage and address, with a complexion rather dark though healthy, black curly hair and a manly engaging countenance, expressive of unaffected candour, ingenuousness and benevolence ; and you will have an idea of what Mr. Schwartz appeared to be at first sight. His garb indeed, which was pretty well worn, seemed foreign and old-fashioned : but in every other respect his appearance was the reverse of all that could be called forbidding or morose. . . . He had much to do with very narrow means. His whole income was ten pagodas a month or about £48 per annum. . . . He obtained, of the commanding officer, a room in an old Gentoo building, which was just large enough to hold his bed and himself, and in which few men could stand upright. With this apartment he was contented. A dish of rice and vegetables, dressed after the manner of the natives, was what he could always cheerfully sit down to : and a piece of dimity, dyed black, and other materials of the same homely sort, sufficed him for an annual supply of clothing. Thus easily provided as to temporalities, his only care was to do the work of an evangelist.”

Such was Schwartz in the prime of his days, and such in the simplicity of his life and devotedness to his work he remained to the end. These are features in the Christian worker which ever appeal to men, and without doubt they contributed largely to Schwartz’s success in Trichinopoly, both as a chaplain and as a missionary. For with all his activity among the soldiers he was careful to husband his chief strength for the mission, and the years at Trichinopoly were years of steady advance.

If he built a church for the Europeans he did likewise for the native Christians; and if he was a welcome visitor at the officers' bungalows, his visits to the pariah's hut or to the homes of the Hindu and Mohammedan, as a messenger of Christ, were yet more frequent and no less welcome. He was the friend of all, and men were proud of his friendship.

#### IV.

In 1778, Schwartz, then in his fifty-second year, removed to Tanjore, where the remaining nineteen years of his life were spent. Then as now the district of Tanjore was one of the richest and most fertile in Southern India, and the imposing temples in Tanjore city, with the attendant religious importance, gave it a high place in the esteem of the Hindu people. In 1769, Schwartz had paid a memorable visit to the small Christian congregation of the place, when he had laid the foundation of an enduring and fruitful friendship with the Rajah. Tuljajee Rajah was a man of considerable intellectual power, self-indulgent indeed in his habits like the majority of his class in those days, but free from many of the usual prejudices of his race and time. Learning that the famous missionary was in his city he invited him to come to the palace, and there an interview of uncommon interest took place between a Hindu Sovereign and the Christian messenger.

The Rajah was perplexed by the differences obtaining between Christian denominations. "How is it," he asked, "that some Europeans worship God with images, and others without them?" To this Schwartz replied that the worship of images is expressly forbidden in the Bible, but because the word of God is kept from many of the people they fall into error and idolatry. "How can man arrive at a knowledge of God?" asked the Rajah, and in reply Schwartz explained how God revealed Himself in Nature, in Christ Jesus, and in His Holy Word. The Rajah listened to all with interested attention, and Schwartz, always practical and instant in season, closed his exposition by an application, remonstrating with the Rajah against the worship of idols as derogatory to the honour of God. The Europeans, he admitted, did the very same so long as they were heathens, for they too made images and "did poojah to the work of their own hands, with salaams and salaams". The expression tickled the Rajah. "Of a surety," he exclaimed, "the padre speaks plain!" It was just such plain speaking that commended Schwartz in the eyes of his hearers. The Rajah heard him repeatedly and with growing satisfaction, and when at last the missionary had to return to Trichinopoly he carried with him the memory of a most friendly farewell. "Remember," said the Rajah, "you are *my* padre."

"The Rajah's padre" Schwartz remained, but Brahman opposition prevented for a time his settling

in Tanjore, as the Rajah earnestly desired. Frequent visits were however paid to the city, and always there was a welcome from Tuljajee. A small church for the native Christians was erected, and prospects were bright, when political troubles threw everything back. The Rajah did not agree well with the Madras Government, and the Nabob of Arcot, who had already wrested from Tanjore the city of Trichinopoly and had long cast envious eyes on the whole territory, thought the opportunity one for action. On account of an unpaid debt he advanced against Tanjore, secured the aid of the British Government, and took the city. Tuljajee was deposed, by decree from Fort St. George, and the Nabob reigned in his stead. In his dire necessity the Rajah had appealed to Schwartz to take up his case. "Padre!" he said, "I have confidence in you, because you are indifferent to money." But Schwartz felt that the matter lay outside his sphere, and he had not then the intimate acquaintance with the British Government which he afterwards enjoyed, and which might have made his interposition useful. When tidings however of the transaction reached England the Directors of the East India Company reversed the obnoxious decision of their Madras agents. In 1776 Tuljajee was restored to the throne, and the mission, which had been frowned upon by the Mohammedan Nabob, speedily revived. A second missionary had in the meantime arrived at Trichinopoly, and Schwartz felt himself free to move

to Tanjore, which he accordingly did in 1778. From Tanjore he frequently visited his old station and continued to supervise the work there, but Tuljajee's capital was henceforth his centre, and there his influence grew daily both with ruler and ruled. His distinctively missionary duties continued to be faithfully attended to, and were as ever his first care, but circumstances now conspired to force the devoted worker also into a wider and more secular sphere of action, where his doings secured for him a celebrity of a kind never attained by any other Indian missionary.

It was now that Schwartz was called to the duty which is perhaps better known than any other episode of his long and varied life. In 1779, to his great surprise, he was invited to Madras to see the Governor, Sir Thomas Rumbold, on a matter of importance, and this proved to be a request that he should proceed to Seringapatam, as a special envoy of the British to Hyder Ali, the Ruler of Mysore! Hyder was then in the zenith of his power, and the English in Madras were in much anxiety. The defences of Fort St. George were weak and their troops were few. Already rumours were circulating of an impending descent on the plains by Hyder and his hordes, and the Government wished to make sure of his intentions and avert if possible the dreaded attack. They had asked Hyder to receive an embassy, but he had no faith in English embassies

or promises. "Let them send me," he said, "*the Christian*: he will not deceive me." He meant Schwartz, and hence the request of the Governor which so surprised the humble missionary.

Schwartz hesitated for a while, as the employment offered was so un-missionary, and in his hesitation he represented truly the general attitude taken by Protestant missionaries towards political complications arising in their fields. Neutrality has ever been their policy, and only under very exceptional circumstances has it been departed from. But Schwartz decided, and rightly so, that this was a case for making an exception. His reasons he has carefully recorded :—

"Having implored wisdom from above, I thought it my duty not to decline the proposal. The grounds which determined me, were :—

"1st. Because the mission to Hyder was not attended with any political intrigues. To preserve the blessings of peace was the only aim I had in view, and at that time I really believed Sir Thomas's intentions to be upright and peaceable. I considered that if God, according to the riches of his mercy, would vouchsafe to employ me as an instrument to establish the happiness of British India, I durst not withdraw myself, nor shrink back on account of the danger of the undertaking, of which I was fully aware: but I ventured upon it in firm reliance upon God and his fatherly protection.

"2nd. Because this would enable me to announce the Gospel of God my Saviour in many parts where it had never been known before. And,

"3rd. As the Honourable Company and the Government had shown me repeated kindness, I conceived that by this journey I might give them some marks of my gratitude. But at the same time, I resolved to keep my hands undefiled



from any presents, by which determination the Lord enabled me to abide: so that I have not accepted a single farthing, save my travelling expenses."

At Seringapatam Hyder received "the Christian" with all courtesy and even cordiality, and granted him permission to preach when and where he liked. Schwartz was greatly impressed with the strict discipline maintained in Hyder's army, and also with the keen mind and business ability of the Mohammedan Ruler; but he saw too that in Hyder's heart lay an ineradicable distrust of the English. A closing interview, when Schwartz had declared the peaceable intentions of the English and his own personal desire to be a peacemaker, ended with ominous words from the Mysorean Chief: "Very well! very well! I am of the same opinion with you; and my only wish is that the English would live in peace with me. If they offer me the hand of peace and concord, I will not withdraw mine, provided ——": there he abruptly stopped and the interview ended. Peace might be on his lips but war was in his heart.

Schwartz returned to Madras, told his story and his impressions, and then hastened to Tanjore, where, sure that war was imminent, he at once laid in a stock of 12,000 bags of rice for the use of the Christians and others in the coming days of scarcity. And he was right. The very next year Hyder, with 100,000 men, swooped down on the Carnatic, carrying devastation and famine to the very walls of

Madras and Tanjore. Yet all through the terrible time which followed Schwartz was permitted to move freely up and down the country as he pleased, not the fiercest trooper daring to lay hand on the man regarding whom Hyder had issued the following order: "Permit the venerable padre Schwartz to pass unmolested, and show him respect and kindness: for he is a holy man, and means no harm to my Government".

In 1784 the long war ended, having been carried on by Tippu Sultan after the death of his father Hyder, and the Carnatic enjoyed peace once more. But the hard experiences of the time had worked a great change on Rajah Tuljajee, and had left him a soured and embittered man. Falling under the influence of a harsh Brahman Dewan (or Prime Minister), Baba by name, he degenerated into an unfeeling and extortionate tyrant. The people groaned under the oppressive and extortionate rule and by the thousands forsook the Rajah's territories. Schwartz remonstrated, but in vain; and at last the Madras Government had to interfere. The oppressive Dewan was dismissed, and a Council of three British officials appointed, as a "Committee of Inspection" to manage the district. At the request of the Resident, Schwartz was added to the Council.

"'Happy would it be for this country,' wrote the Resident to the Madras Governor, 'for the Company and for the Rajah himself, if he (Schwartz) possessed the whole authority, and

were invested with power to execute all the measures that his wisdom and benevolence would suggest.' The Governor, Sir Archibald Campbell, knew Schwartz's worth and readily acceded. 'Such is my opinion,' he wrote, 'of Mr. Schwartz's abilities and integrity that I have recommended him to the Board that he should be admitted a member of the Committee without any reservation whatever, and my confidence in him is such, that I think many advantages may be derived therefrom.' "

These were high eulogiums for civil authorities to pass on a humble missionary, most honourable to Schwartz, and as the event demonstrated entirely justified. The presence on the Council of the experienced and sympathetic friend of the Rajah and of the people proved most valuable, smoothing intercourse with the Rajah, and securing the application of many practical measures of reform. For many years Schwartz was the real ruler of Tanjore. Yet as ever the cause of the Christians was very near his heart, and by virtue of his position and influence the path was smoothed in many ways for the development of the Christian community.

Yet another responsible civil duty was thrust upon him, this time by the Rajah himself, who was now growing old and infirm but as full of trust in Schwartz as ever. Death had deprived the Rajah of his only son, and following Hindu usage, before his own death in 1787, he adopted as his heir, Serfojee, a boy of ten years of age, the son of a near relative. When on his deathbed he sent for the missionary, and placing the boy's hand into his

said, "This is not my son but yours. Into your hand I deliver him." Next day he said again to Schwartz, "I appoint you guardian to this child. I put his hand in yours." Surely an unparalleled trust for a Hindu Prince to repose in a Christian missionary!

To Schwartz however the responsibility seemed too great and too opposed to Hindu usage to be desirable, so at his request the guardianship was entrusted to the Rajah's half-brother, Ameer Singh, who was also appointed Regent during Serfojee's minority. The arrangement was the natural one to make, and on Schwartz's recommendation it was approved by the Madras Government. That it did not turn out according to Schwartz's expectations was due to the intrigue and ambition of the new Regent. On false evidence Ameer Singh led the English Government to declare the adoption of Serfojee invalid, and got himself appointed Rajah. The position of the dispossessed heir was now extremely perilous, and without doubt he would soon have vanished from the scene had it not been for Schwartz's watchfulness. But on Ameer Singh showing signs of cruelty and worse towards the boy, Schwartz reported the matter to Madras, and by order of the English Government the young Prince was removed to Madras for safety and for training. Through the years that followed, Schwartz visited his charge occasionally and wrote him frequently, kind, wise, stimulating letters, which

among other counsels never failed to include words that pointed him to the highest things. One such letter, which he wrote in January, 1795, deserves to be quoted, by reason both of its own excellence and of the fresh light which it throws upon the many-sided writer. As a letter-writer to the young it shows Schwartz not far behind Luther;—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“At present I have no letter to answer. The season of the new year puts me in mind to wish you true happiness. Hitherto God has preserved us. To this moment we enjoy his mercy. But surely we do not know how long we are to enjoy it. We are planted by God as trees. The trees are to bring forth good fruit, by which God is to be honoured. What sort of fruit we have borne, we are to inquire by searching our hearts. If we do not bear good fruit, we shall at last be cut down. I heartily wish and beseech God to make you a good tree, which bears good fruit to the praise of God, your Maker and Benefactor. Besides the welfare of our souls, which ought to be our first concern, we are obliged to prepare for the wise exercise of every duty to which God calls us.

“You in your station ought to learn all virtues by the exercise of which you may become beneficial to mankind—justice, benevolence, patience, and resignation to the will of God.

“I wish you may read history, by which you may be instructed in every necessary point. History shows how many princes have exercised justice, benevolence, and diligence, by which they have made a whole nation happy. But history informs you likewise how many princes have indulged in wickedness, and impiety, and sloth, and cruelty, by which they have even ruined their lives. In short it is and will always be true, what was said to an Israelitish King, ‘Thou hast forsaken God, therefore God will forsake thee’.

“Do not, my dear friend, indulge in sloth and idleness: be diligent in every laudable thing. . . . My love to you inclineth

me to write in this manner. I wish to hear from the Rev. Mr. Guericke that you improve in all that is good.

"I am, your faithful friend,  
"C. F. SCHWARTZ."

It has been regarded by some as a fault in Schwartz that he did not use to the fullest extent his rare opportunity, and exercise his influence to win his young charge to the Christian faith. But it will be readily understood that, in the absence of any sanction for such a step from Rajah Tulja-jee, Schwartz felt himself in honour restricted in this matter, and accordingly Serfojee grew up a "Christian Indian" and not an "Indian Christian". The consideration also no doubt weighed, that should the Prince become Christian he forfeited for ever his claims to the throne of Tanjore: and ultimately these claims were recognised. On Schwartz's initiative, the falsity of the evidence on which the adoption of Serfojee had been declared invalid was conclusively proved, and Ameer Singh had to vacate the throne in his favour. But this did not occur until after Schwartz's life had closed.

Throughout the greater part of Ameer Singh's rule Schwartz remained in Tanjore, watching over the interests of the Christians, and exercising a salutary influence in many other directions. The English Government at Madras prized his presence there and valued his counsel: and the Tanjore people knew the benefit of having him residing in their midst. At one time he acted as British Resident

for a period of two years, and without pay—for he never sacrificed his missionary freedom: at another time he was reviser of the judgments of the Court of Tanjore: at another he drew up a scheme for the better administration of the revenues of Tanjore, which was subsequently adopted. Yet all these activities were scrupulously subordinated to the main work of his life, and each in its measure was made to serve that work's advancement. In his nineteen years at Tanjore he saw grow up around him a native Christian community of 3,000 souls, diligently served by an efficient staff of native workers under his own supervision, while extensions of operations in such remoter districts as Madura, Ramnad, and Tinnevely, were undertaken as opportunities offered.

Of these the extension to far south Tinnevely has special interest, as being the seed from which in modern times the most bountiful harvest in all India has been reaped. To Schwartz the Church of Tinnevely owes its origin. In 1771 when still at Trichinopoly he wrote that at Palamcotta, a fort and one of the chief places in Tinnevely, "there resides a Christian of our congregation, Schavrimuttu, who having been instructed reads the word of God to the resident Romish and heathens. And an English sergeant, whose wife is a member of our congregation, has in a manner taken up the cause." That was the beginning. In 1778 Schwartz himself visited Palamcotta, and found numerous former

members of his Tanjore and Trichinopoly congregations in the native regiment stationed there: and also a Brahman widow, Clarinda, whom he had known at Trichinopoly and who even then had desired baptism. An irregularity in her life had at that time made Schwartz refuse to baptize her, but as now there was no cause for hesitation Clarinda was baptized, and became the main pillar of the Christian cause in Tinnevelly. Through her exertion, and the help of some English officers, a small church was built, and regular congregational life began, with a membership of some twenty souls. Soon it grew to 100, and six years later there were 160 Christians with two catechists and a schoolmaster. In 1785 Schwartz again visited Palamcotta, and a year later,—so interested was he in this far southern field,—he sent his favourite catechist, Saththianadhan, to be its permanent minister. Four years later Saththianadhan was ordained by the Tranquebar missionaries, greatly to the joy of his venerable chief, and under this native worker of rare excellence the Tinnevelly Church grew daily. “I have never met his equal,” said Schwartz, “among the natives of this country.”

Of his own many-sided work Schwartz habitually said little: his humble-mindedness made it distasteful to him to speak of self. Once however he was stung by unworthy attacks into making a plain forcible statement as to the value and extent of his work,



The attack occurred in the House of Commons in 1793, when the East India Company's Charter had to be renewed, and the endeavour was made by the friends of missions, with Wilberforce at their head, to pass a resolution recognising the missionary obligations of the Company, and empowering it to send out to India from time to time missionaries, schoolmasters and others. The Resolution was rejected, and many violent anti-missionary speeches were made, one being by Mr. Montgomery Campbell, formerly private secretary to Sir Archibald Campbell when the latter was Governor of Madras. Mr. Campbell scouted the idea of converting India, held that missionaries and native Christians were hurtful to the country, belittled the character of the converts made by the Tranquebar missionaries, and quoted an entirely fallacious anecdote of Schwartz having been duped and robbed by his own converts.

In reply Schwartz forwarded to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge a plain, forcible, and convincing statement, regarding the services of the Mission, and the character of its converts, which is a veritable *apologia*. It is too long for insertion here, but some passages may be quoted which refer to episodes of special interest. First the fallacious anecdote is demolished, and then, following a noble tribute to the work of his colleague Guericke, there comes a plain unvarnished record of some passages in his own life.

“In the course of the late war the fort of Tanjore was in a very critical condition. A powerful enemy was near: the people in the fort numerous: and not provision even for the garrison. There was grain enough in the country, but we had no bullocks to bring it into the fort. When the country people formerly brought paddy (rice) into the fort, the rapacious dubashes deprived them of their due pay. Hence all confidence was lost: so that the inhabitants drove away their cattle—refusing to assist the fort. The late Rajah ordered, nay, entreated the people by his managers, to come and help us: but all was in vain.

“At last the Rajah said to one of our principal gentlemen, ‘We all, you and I, have lost our credit: let us try whether the inhabitants will trust Mr. Schwartz’. Accordingly he sent me a blank paper empowering me to make a proper agreement with the people. . . . There was no time for hesitation. Our streets were lined with dead corpses every morning. I sent therefore letters everywhere, round about, promising to pay everyone with my own hands, and to indemnify them for the loss of every bullock which might be taken by the enemy. In two days I got about 1000 oxen, and sent one of our catechists and other Christians into the country. They went at the risk of their lives, made all possible haste, and brought into the fort in a very short time eighty thousand kalams. By this means the fort was saved.”

“It is asserted that the inhabitants of the country would suffer by missionaries. . . . When Sir Archibald Campbell was Governor and Mr. M. Campbell his private secretary, the inhabitants of Tanjore were so miserably oppressed by the manager and the Madras dubashes, that they quitted the country. Of course all cultivation ceased. Every one dreaded the calamity of famine. I entreated the Rajah to remove that shameful oppression, and to recall the inhabitants. He sent them word that justice should be done to them, but they disbelieved his promises. He then desired me to write to them, and to assure them that he, at my intercession, would show kindness to them. I did so. All immediately returned. . . . When I exhorted them to exert themselves to the utmost, because the time for

cultivation was almost lost, they replied in the following manner: 'As you have showed kindness to us, you shall not have reason to repent of it: we intend to work night and day to show our regard for you'. Sir Archibald Campbell was happy when he heard of it: and we had the satisfaction of having a better crop than the preceding year."

"No native has suffered by Christians: none has complained of it. On the contrary one of the richest inhabitants said to me, 'Sir, if you send a person to us, send us one who has learned all your ten commandments'."

"Now I am well aware that some will accuse me of having boasted. I confess the charge willingly, but lay all the blame upon those who have constrained me to commit this folly. One thing, however, I affirm, before God and man, *that if Christianity, in its plain and undisguised form, were properly promoted, the country would not suffer but benefit by it.* The glorious God and our blessed Redeemer commanded his apostles to preach the Gospel to all nations. The knowledge of God, of his Divine perfections, and of his mercy to mankind may be abused: but there is no other method of reclaiming men than by instructing them well. To hope that the heathens will lead a good life, without the knowledge of God, is a chimera."

"I am now on the brink of eternity: but to this moment I declare that I do not repent of having spent forty-three years here in the service of my divine Master."

A withering refutation of a most unworthy attack is this *apologia*. It stands by itself in Schwartz's writings as an example of the strong plain language which righteous indignation could wring from him, and brings to the front an element in his character, that his ordinary letters, clothed in more conventional religious phrase, do not equally emphasise. These reveal the pure heart and the earnest aspirations of

the man of God : this makes plain the sound judgment, the practical sense, and the forceful will which accompanied these qualities. If Schwartz was a man of prayer, he was a man of action too.

## V.

In peaceful activity and surrounded by an atmosphere of universal good-will, the veteran missionary spent the evening of his long day. In those closing years he might well have stood for the original of Sir William Hunter's picture of "The Old Missionary," for the combination of father, priest, and law-giver to his people, which is there so beautifully portrayed, was realised in Friederich Schwartz. Loved, revered, and honoured on all sides, he was a living benediction to Tanjore and its people, and an influence for good over the whole of the South-East of India. But the night drew on, though it was not till the seventy-first year of his life had been completed that the final darkness fell, and mercifully his capacity for work continued strong until within a few months of the end. In October, 1797, he was laid aside by illness, and on 13th February, 1798, surrounded by his friends and colleagues, and cheering them to the last by his farewell counsels and strong words on things eternal, this grand old man of Indian Missions passed to the presence of his Lord. Shortly before he died he joined in singing one of his favourite German hymns, the words of which gave fit ex-

pression to the calm, simple and steadfast faith in which the supreme hour was met :

“ Christus, der ist mein Leben,  
Sterben ist mein Gewinn :  
Dem hab’ ich mich ergeben,  
Mit Freud’ fahr ich dahin.

“ Mit Freud’ fahr ich von dannen  
Zu Christ, dem Bruder mein,  
Auf dass ich zu ihm komme  
Und ewig bei ihm sei.”

Soon after this he passed away, commending his soul to God in the great words hallowed by our Lord’s own use on Calvary—“Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, Thou hast redeemed me, O God of truth ”.

When the tidings went out, all over the land was heard a great wail that “the good padre” was no more. Prince and peasant, soldiers and civilians, Christian, Hindu and Mohammedan, alike mourned the friend whom they had lost. Never probably has the death of a Christian missionary been regretted in India by men of so many different races, classes and positions : and certainly no other missionary has been so honoured in his death by the ruling powers. Rajah Serfojee, who had hastened to the deathbed of his revered guardian and had followed his remains to the grave—a most unusual step for a high caste Hindu to take—procured later from England, for erection in the mission church, a

monument in marble, on which Flaxman, the eminent sculptor, carved a touching group representing the deathbed of the old missionary. Round the dying saint are gathered his colleague Guericke, some native Christians with their children and the Rajah himself—"A simple, natural and affecting scene," said Dr. Duff, fifty years later, when deeply moved he gazed upon it, "and the group who compose it possess an interest to the Christian mind beyond what mere words can express". A yet further royal tribute was paid by the Rajah, who himself composed the epitaph engraved on the stone in the church, beneath which rest the mortal remains of the beloved and honoured dead. The lines lack no doubt in poetic merit, but that is more than atoned for by the uniqueness of the authorship, and the affectionate appreciation of the departed which breathes in every word.

"Firm wast thou, humble and wise,  
Honest, pure, free from disguise,  
Father of orphans, the widow's support,  
Comfort in sorrow of every sort :  
To the benighted, dispenser of light,  
Doing and pointing to, that which is right :  
Blessing to friends, to people, to me,  
May I, my Father, be worthy of thee,  
Wisheth and prayeth thy *Sarabojee*."

"Considering," as Duff says, "who the author was—a heathen prince—do these lines not contain a wonderful testimony to a Christian Missionary?"

Equal respect was shown from the side of the

British rulers. Conscious of the great services Schwartz had rendered, the East India Company sent out to Madras a noble marble monument, to be erected in St. Mary's Church, Fort St. George, where it remains one of the most precious of the many precious tablets erected there, in memory of the honoured dead of Southern India. In the long inscription which records the outstanding incidents in the missionary's life, his character is thus fittingly summed up: "His life was one continued effort to imitate the example of his blessed Master. . . . During a period of fifty years he 'went about doing good'."

There the main secret of Schwartz's power with all sorts and conditions of men is rightly expressed,—it lay in his *goodness*: and his life stands out as one long illustration of the power of simple goodness in winning the heart of man. For fifty years he went in and out among the people, visiting palace and hut alike, and everywhere men felt that a good man is here. So they trusted him and loved him, and were influenced by him for good. Converts he won in greater numbers than any other Indian Protestant missionary—over 6000 he is said to have baptized,—but his supreme service lies in that, by his own example, he so commended Christ that thousands, who never acknowledged the Christian faith as theirs, yet because they had known Christ's faithful servant, formed a truer judgment of Christ and his religion, and were stimulated to follow the example of the

good man they so deeply revered. He was a "living epistle known and read of all men," and what they read was good and pure and true. "One of the most active and fearless, as well as one of the most successful Missionaries, who have appeared since the Apostles," is the testimony of Bishop Heber regarding him : and to this may be added—and likewise one of the most winning and blameless Christians whom India has been privileged to see.

## VI.

With the death of Schwartz the old Coast Mission, as the Danish Mission with its Anglo-Danish developments was usually termed, reached its culminating point. A century of work and achievement lay behind it, of which any mission might be proud, and which in a pioneer enterprise was truly remarkable. In the hundred years some fifty missionaries had been sent from Europe, and the progress of the mission they served had been great and unbroken. In all it is estimated that over 40,000 natives of India had been baptized, and at the close of the century the prospect was one of continued prosperity. But the event proved sadly otherwise. With the beginning of the nineteenth century there set in a decadence, so rapid and profound that it forms the most regrettable episode in the whole history of modern Indian Missions.

It is impossible to dissociate altogether this decadence of their work from the men whose work it



was, and not to draw some adverse conclusions as to the quality of their building, which, had the edifice remained stable, would never have been suggested. But not infrequently the connection has been over-emphasised, with the result of an over-severe verdict being passed. That the methods of Schwartz and his brother missionaries had much to do with the lack of their work's stability is undeniable. But there were other causes at least equally powerful which conduced to the decay, and of these the spiritual decadence in the Churches of Continental Europe was one of the chief. If ever a hopeful mission was strangled by failure at the home base, it was the Danish Mission of Tranquebar. By the end of the eighteenth century rationalism had spread like a canker through Germany and Denmark, reducing to a shadow the missionary spirit of earlier days; Halle, the mother of many missionaries, was no longer the home of Pietism, and volunteers for the foreign field no more went forth from her University; and at Copenhagen, the seat of the Board of governors, the missionary spirit was all but dead. On the field the consequences of this melancholy change were disastrous. Vacancies in the mission staff were left unfilled, until the missionary band came to be reduced to a skeleton; and of the missionaries who were sent, some were missionaries only in name. "The Mission shall no longer aim at conversions," was the instruction sent out in 1824, "but it shall establish Schools in which such knowledge

as is profitable to everybody shall be taught, in order that the right way may be prepared for the true dissemination of Christianity." An amazing revision of Christ's command, "Preach the gospel to every creature"! And the missionaries adopted the revision. Ziegenbalg's sound catechism was supplanted by one drawing its sanctions from nature rather than from revelation; and the missionaries became celebrated not for the power of their Gospel message, but for their skill as instructors in general knowledge or for their scientific acquirements. As for the congregations of native Christians, and the whole Church organisation which had been built up so faithfully and laboriously by the men who were gone, the care of these was largely handed over to native catechists and a few ordained native ministers. Can it be wondered at that under conditions like these there was a rapid declension? When Schwartz died, it is estimated that the Christian community throughout the whole field—Tranquebar, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madras, Cuddalore and Tinnevely—numbered about 20,000. Fifty years later—excluding Tinnevely, where under English auspices the work was rapidly growing—the numbers had shrunk to about 5000!

On any mission, managed as the Coast Mission had now come to be, it was inevitable that shrinkage would descend: but not quite so calamitous a shrinkage as this. More than defective home management is needed to explain the catastrophe; and

in the rapidity of the decline, rather than in the decline itself, there is revealed the one serious defect which marked the missionary methods of Schwartz and his colleagues. Had they not tolerated Caste in their churches, with its sanctioned separation of Sudra from Pariah both in the services of the church and in daily life, the decay had not been of such regrettable rapidity: or had their successors been men of like spirit with themselves, watchful, tender and true, decay had perchance not come at all. But deprived of sympathetic European guidance and supervision and with the noxious seed of caste rooted in its heart, the nascent Christian Church afforded all too rich a field for the seed to spring up and bear unhindered its fatal fruit. How dangerous the seed was Schwartz had fully recognised, but his personal influence and loving exhortation had prevented its fruit appearing in any very hurtful form. So too had it been with his foster-son and successor, the younger Kohlhoff, but when in later days the watchfulness relaxed, the evil fruit quickly appeared. Into the Church there crept unbrotherliness and strife, the spirit of the Church's Lord took flight, and the sad decadence followed. Nor did recovery begin until, under other auspices, English and American missionaries took up the work in the same fields, and learning from the mistakes of their predecessors refused to countenance caste in the Church of Christ in any shape or form.

But while Schwartz in common with all the

missionaries of his time committed the error of tolerating caste, this must not be allowed to lessen our admiration for the man, and our recognition of the immense value of the work done by him and his brethren through the long years of the eighteenth century. They planted a pure Christianity for the first time in India, exemplified the Christian life in a manner that compelled India's respect, secured for Indian Missions a permanent place in the thoughts of Christian Europe, brought light and strength and hope to many thousands of India's sons and daughters in the day of their activity, and won for Christianity a place in Southern India such as has paved the way for the notable advances it has made in later days.

## CHAPTER IX

WILLIAM CAREY

(1761-1834)

“GOD hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.” Christian Missions supply many examples of this divine method, but none which is more impressive and convincing than that afforded by the life and work of *William Carey*, the first of her own missionary sons whom England sent to India. It was indeed a tardy sending. The great East India Company, formed in the year 1600, had from that time carried on unremittingly a valuable and increasing trade with India. Settlements had been established, territories had been acquired, and the Company had grown to be a great power in India. Britain’s sons went out to the East in a regular stream, soldiers, sailors, civilians, merchants, traders, and adventurers: but for two hundred years no place among that crowd of eastward-bound was found for a Christian missionary. It is true, as we have seen, that from the time when the Danish-Halle Mission

began its work in Tranquebar, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge gave small grants in aid of that work, and that these were gradually increased as under Schwartz and others the operations extended. But the deadness of the British Churches, as a whole, regarding their missionary duty, is shown by the humbling fact that for nearly a century after the Coast Mission had been at work, while modest financial help continued to go from England, no personal service was rendered. Till the close of the eighteenth century, the only Protestant missionaries who proceeded from Europe to India were either Danes or Germans. This alone is sufficient evidence of the missionary apathy which then brooded over the Churches of Britain.

There were indeed some causes other than apathy which contributed to this striking lack of English missionaries, and one which, as will be seen, became subsequently very powerful, was the active opposition offered by the East India Company to all missionary activity. But in the earlier days this opposition did not exist. Then the Company's agents in India were friendly rather than hostile, as was evidenced by the cordial relations they maintained with Schwartz in Tanjore. No, the keen hostility of the Company to missions and missionaries was a later development, when its stake in India had largely increased. Throughout the eighteenth century, it may be said with general accuracy, it was the deadness of the Home Churches and not the

hostility of the Company that was the main reason for Britain sending no missionaries to India. If Christian Missions were to take their rightful place in Britain's Indian activities, a double conversion was clearly required,—a conversion in Britain as well as in India, a conversion of the Churches to their missionary duty, as well as a conversion of the Hindus to the Christian faith. And the man who in the providence of God was called to perform this double service was one of the very last whom Britain would itself have named,—not any of the great ones in the religious world, no Anglican Archbishop or Bishop, no Scottish Moderator or ex-Moderator, no leader of any of the Nonconformist Churches, but a humble Baptist minister in Northamptonshire, William Carey by name, who preached to his little flock on Sundays, and on week-days eked out his meagre living by following the trade of a village shoemaker.

## I.

Carey's early life is soon told. Its story is that of one of the poor of England, who but for his spiritual and intellectual gifts and industrious habits would have remained a humble cobbler all his days, and would at last have been laid to rest in the village grave-yard, if not unwept, at least unhonoured and unsung. But a very different fate was to be his.

He was born in 1761, in the village of Paulerspury,

in Northamptonshire, where his father was the parish clerk and kept a little school, but so meagre were the home resources that at fourteen years of age Carey had to take his part in earning for the family, and was apprenticed to a shoemaker. At this time he was a keen son of the Church of England, and indeed was rather disposed in his thoughts to belittle those who were outside the Anglican fold. Four years later however, when a youth of eighteen years, he underwent a spiritual change, and as he found more congenial fellowship with the Baptists, he joined that denomination, and a loyal Baptist he remained all his days.

Shoemaking is a trade that has given to the world many intellectual giants, and even when it does not give giants it has often produced marvellously keen thinkers and able controversialists. In the country districts of Scotland and England this is still the case, and nowadays in our own land it is only in such districts that the conditions continue which permit of quiet thinking being carried on simultaneously with manual work. One does not expect philosophers from a city shoe-factory. It is the village cobbler's stool that is the professor's chair: and Carey is perhaps the prince of all the professors who have thus been trained. While he cobbled he studied. Latin, Greek and Hebrew, in an elementary form, were successively assimilated. On Sundays when the cobbling ceased he preached: not very brilliantly at first, but sufficiently well by 1787 to



warrant his ordination to the ministry of the Baptist Church, and his appointment to the charge of the small Baptist congregation at Moulton. But it was no lordly living, for his whole salary was only £16 per annum. So the shoemaking had still to go on; and he had now more mouths to fill and bodies to clothe than his own. While he was not yet twenty years of age his master had died, and Carey had taken over the business, and had married his late master's sister-in-law, a dull commonplace young woman, named Dolly Plackett. It was a rash step which laid a burden on Carey's life for many years, but of which he never complained: for poor Dolly Plackett, while quite a suitable wife for one who was a country cobbler ~~and~~ nothing more, was deplorably unsuitable as a ~~wife for~~ one who was to be very much more. Her life had been happier had she not married an enthusiast.

As a change from shoemaking, Carey for a time tried schoolmastering, but the experiment failed and he returned to his trade. One service however his teaching experience did, which proved of much value: it quickened his interest in geography. These were the days of exploration and discovery; *Cook's Voyages* was a book that Carey devoured, and his interest in the peoples of the world grew daily. On the wall of his little workshop he pasted a large map of the world, made of several sheets fixed together, and in each country he jotted down the results of his reading,—the approximate population, the

language, customs, and religion of the people. So the vastness of heathenism came home to him, and he awoke to a sense of its terrible need, and of the urgent duty which rested on the Christian Church to supply that need. The missionary spirit was at last born in the heart of one Englishman.

But how was he to get it born in the hearts of his countrymen? His first attempt was exceedingly discouraging. At a meeting of ministers of his own denomination at Northampton, in 1786, he proposed that they should discuss this topic: "The duty of Christians to attempt the spread of the Gospel among heathen nations". The very idea of such a thing seemed preposterous. "Young man," said Mr. Ryland, the chairman, "sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen He will do it without your aid or mine;" and Mr. Fuller, another of those present remarked: "If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be!"

Carey was silenced but not convinced. He held on his way, and had the satisfaction of seeing his views gradually making an impression. In 1792 he published an able pamphlet embodying the result of his inquiries into the state of the heathen world, and giving his convictions as to the "obligations of Christians, to use means for the conversion of the Heathens". In all the Churches he found some readers, and opinions began to be expressed in favour of Carey's position. In his own denomination Ryland and Fuller were completely won over,

and in the same year, 1792, the decisive step was taken. At Northampton at a meeting of ministers, Carey preached a memorable sermon from Isaiah liv. 2, 3, and unfolded his theme under the two ~~heads now~~ historic :—

*“Expect great things from God.  
Attempt great things for God.”*

At the close of the service it was resolved to establish a Missionary Society, for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen, and on 2nd October, 1792, at Kettering, the resolution was carried into effect by the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, with Mr. Fuller as secretary. Twelve ministers were present, and they there contributed the first missionary collection ever taken in Reformed Britain. It amounted to £13 2s. 6d., the first-fruits of what has grown to a great harvest.

Carey offered himself for the work, and declared that he was ready to go to whatever part of the heathen world the society might choose to send him. The South Seas or Western Africa were in his mind, but just at the time when his offer was made there arrived in England one John Thomas, a surgeon who had been in India and had there done some desultory Christian work among the natives of Bengal,—a wayward and erratic man, who on that account had been sent home, but undoubtedly devoted. Thomas pressed the claims of India on the young society, and offered to return there as

Carey's colleague. His counsel was taken and his offer of personal service was accepted, unfortunately as it proved for some things, but fortunately for others. Certainly it was fortunate for India, as but for Thomas's advocacy of her claims she would never have enjoyed the priceless services of William Carey. At the very outset however Thomas's connection threatened to destroy the whole scheme, for he was in a sack of debt and writs were out for his arrest. From the Indiaman on which the mission party had embarked they were put ashore, as Thomas's creditors threatened to inform on the captain for taking missionaries to India without the license of the Company. But a Danish ship, bound for India, came to the rescue, and in her the party ultimately got off in safety. It was a large party,—Carey and his wife, who went most reluctantly, only consenting at the very last, her sister, the Carey's five children, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas,—verily an ill-assorted group such as no missionary society to-day would ever dream of sending to India. Yet no party has ever sailed from England which has done more for India than this party accomplished, and it was with a glad heart that Carey found himself at last sailing down the Channel, bound for the Far East. The dream of his life was being fulfilled, the dearest wish of his heart was being granted; God's task for his Church, so long left undone, was now to be begun, and the Church had pledged herself to the doing of it. "It is clear," said Fuller to Carey,

“that there is a rich mine of gold in India: if you will go down, I will hold the ropes.”

## II.

Calcutta was reached on 10th November, 1793, a memorable date for Indian Christianity, but there was little sign at first of its epoch-making importance. Calcutta, in coming years, was to know intimately and value highly the man who landed that day, but his missionary apprenticeship had first to be served elsewhere. Troubles crowded thick upon Carey and his companions as soon as they arrived, not from any hostile action of the authorities—they took no notice of the new-comers—but from the incompetency of the wayward Thomas. To him had been entrusted the meagrely filled purse and the goods whose sale was expected to support the little band, but he proved a miserable financier. The little money was squandered, the goods realised almost nothing, and Carey found himself and his large family of dependants face to face with dire poverty,—a condition which was rendered still harder by the reproaches of his wife and sister-in-law. For shelter they were indebted to a wealthy Hindu who put a small house at their disposal, and in spite of illness and want Carey set himself to continue the study of Bengali, which he had begun with Thomas on the voyage. But the material needs of the family could not be satisfied in that way, and hearing that there was land to be had in the Soondarbuns south-east

of Calcutta, the family migrated to that pestilential feverish district. There Carey built huts and began to practise agriculture, and, as was ever his way, put as brave a face on things as he could. Writing to Mr. Fuller, the secretary, he says :—

“ Wild hogs and deer and fowl are to be procured with the gun, and must supply us with a considerable portion of our food. I find an inconvenience in having so much of my time taken up in procuring provisions and cultivating my little farm. But when my house is built I shall have more leisure than at present, and have daily opportunities of conversing with the natives and pursuing the work of the Mission. . . . My health was never better. The climate though hot is tolerable : but attended as I am with difficulties, I would not renounce my undertaking for all the world.”<sup>1</sup>

He was a brave soul, but the Soondarbuns would quickly have ended him. Happily for India an old friend of Thomas's came to the rescue,—one of the few good results that flowed from the connection. This was Mr. Udny, a well-to-do Government servant, who, as was the custom in those days, carried on several private ventures of his own in addition to performing his official duties. One of these ventures was an indigo factory at Madnabati, in the Malda district, and learning through Thomas of Carey and his need, Mr. Udny offered him the managership of the factory on a monthly salary of 200 rupees, with full liberty to carry on his missionary work as well.

<sup>1</sup> Quotations of missionaries' words, in this and the subsequent two chapters, save where otherwise indicated, are from the Biographies by Dr. Geo. Smith.

Carey joyfully accepted, and for five years (1795-1800) Madnabati was his home.

It was not a healthy locality: one of his children died, his wife developed a tendency to mania which grew steadily worse, and all suffered from fever, but in these five years was laid the foundation on which Carey's later successes were built. Here he got to the heart of Hinduism in a manner he never would have done in semi-Europeanised Calcutta. In that close touch with the natives, which district-work pre-eminently secures, he learned to know them thoroughly, acquired an excellent knowledge of their language as well as facility in its use, and gained an intimate understanding of the Hindu religion. The factory duties were faithfully done, but he found time for persistent and extensive missionary work as well. A school was opened, regular preaching tours were held through a district twenty miles square, in which were some two hundred villages, and most important of all, the Bible was translated into Bengali. At this Carey worked steadily and by the end of the third year the translation was completed. This study of Bengali led him to see the need of mastering Sanskrit, and his delight over the treasures which were thus opened to him reveal the scholar-soul. Writing to Ryland in 1796 he says:—

“I have read a considerable part of the *Mahabharata*, written in most beautiful language and much upon a par with Homer: and if it was, like his *Iliad*, only considered as a great effort of

human genius, I should think it one of the first productions in the world : but alas ! it is the ground of faith to millions of the simple sons of men, and as such must be held in the utmost abhorrence."

In 1799, Mr. Udney sold his factory and retired to England, but Carey was now able out of his savings to buy the small out-factory of Kidderpore, and by means of this he hoped to support the mission. An old printing press was bought, wherewith to print his Bible. More colleagues from home were asked for, and the pioneer dreamed hopeful dreams of Madnabati as a great missionary centre, from which the truth would radiate through Bengal. A missionary brotherhood was his idea, or, seeing that the married state was recommended, one should rather say a missionary communistic settlement. In view of subsequent happenings Carey's earliest sketch of what he aimed at is of special interest. To Fuller he wrote:—

"I now propose to you what I would recommend to the Society : you will find it similar to what the Moravians do. Seven or eight families can be maintained for nearly the same expense as one, if this method be pursued. I then earnestly entreat the Society to set their faces this way, and send out more missionaries. We ought to be given seven or eight families together : and it is absolutely necessary for the wives of missionaries to be as hearty in their work as their husbands. Our families should be considered nurseries for the mission : and among us should be a person capable of teaching school, so as to educate our children. I recommend all living together in a number of little straw houses, forming a line or square, and of having nothing of our own, but all general



stock. One or two should be elected stewards to preside over all the management, which should, with respect to eating, drinking, worship, learning, preaching, excursions, etc., be reduced to fixed rules."

The dream was to be realised, but not at Madnabati, for events now happened which changed the mission's location and destiny.

Carey's example in journeying forth to India, to do battle in the name of the Lord with the serried might of Hinduism, had lit the missionary fire in Britain, and his letters home during these five years, widely circulated as they had been, had fanned the fire into a blaze. The old apathy as to missions had at last begun to vanish, every Church in Britain was now developing some missionary spirit, and in bringing to pass this momentous change the main instrument had been William Carey.

"The eyes of the religious world are upon you," wrote Fuller to him in 1799, "your undertaking with that of your dear colleague has provoked many. The spirit of Missions is gone forth. I wish it may never stop till the Gospel is sent into all the world."

In the same year the glad word came to Carey that four new missionaries had arrived in India to assist him in his work. But it was accompanied by grave tidings which showed that the East India Company was taking fright at the uprising missionary spirit in England, and that its officers in India were to change their indifference into hostility. The four missionaries had indeed arrived, in an American ship which

anchored in the Hooghly opposite Calcutta, but the authorities declined to allow them to land, and had warned them that any attempt on their part so to do would lead to their deportation. It was a dire dilemma, though not altogether unforeseen. Prior to their departure from England the missionaries had received from Charles Grant, the leading director of the Company and a staunch friend of missions, the counsel on which they now promptly acted. "Do not land at Calcutta," he advised, "but at Serampore, and there, under the protection of the Danish flag, arrange to join Mr. Carey." Slipping quietly overboard, the missionaries got off in two small boats, and sailing up the river reached in safety the fifteen-mile-distant port of Serampore. From Colonel Bie, the Danish Governor, they received a cordial welcome, and the assurance of his protection. He was an old friend of Schwartz, whom he had known and valued at Tranquebar, and well it was for the missionary cause that at this critical moment he was the man in authority at Serampore. Colonel Bie is the living link between Schwartz and Carey, between the apostles of the South and North, and his service was of the utmost moment. Lord Wellesley, the Governor of Bengal, demanded that the missionaries be sent to Calcutta for deportation to England, but Colonel Bie resolutely declined: and when Lord Wellesley found that insistence on his demand would result in international trouble with Denmark and possibly also with America, he cooled down and let

the matter drop. But this decided the future locality of the mission. Madnabati, being in Bengal, was impossible, and reluctantly Carey recognised this. His five years' home was broken up, his factory sacrificed, his developing work forsaken, and he and his moved to the Danish settlement of Serampore, on 10th January, 1800, there to begin with his new colleagues the most far-reaching missionary enterprise that India yet had seen.

### III.

The strength and success of the Serampore Mission lay primarily in its *personnel*. Of the four new arrivals two bore names destined to be known and honoured in future generations wherever Carey's name should be familiar, for along with him they formed the immortal Trio of Serampore—Carey, Marshman and Ward. What the others, Grant and Brunsdon, might have become cannot be told, for they were early cut off by death, but the two who survived were men singularly well adapted to the special needs of the hour. *William Ward* was a skilled printer and an erstwhile editor of the *Derby Mercury*, a man of keen intelligence, practical skill, and wide outlook. *Joshua Marshman*, formerly a successful teacher in a Bristol school, was a man of culture as well as of evangelical zeal. Seldom has a mission been blessed with so perfect a combination of workers, men with talents widely different but remarkably suited to the varied lines of work that

lay ahead, and in spirit forming an unbroken unity. From the very first the three drew to each other, and a bond of brotherhood was formed which was broken only by death.

To understand the mode of life which they adopted, it is necessary to keep in mind the lines laid down by the home organisers of the mission. Perforce, as well as of choice, the expenses of the missionaries had to be restricted to the lowest possible figure, for the grants promised from the Society were pitifully small,—only £360 a year for all the six families. During the first three years of their residence in India, Carey and his companions received in all only £200 from home; the missionaries being supposed not only to preach the Gospel, but also as far as possible to support themselves. “Apostolic” lines were to be followed, to a degree which to-day few if any missions think advisable, and just as St. Paul laboured at tent-making that he might be burdensome to none, so did these missionaries seek to free the Society at home from the burden of their support. Hence the farming in the Soondarbuns, hence the indigo factory at Madnabati, and hence the practice of more than Spartan economy. Simplicity of living was a sheer necessity, and by adopting the Moravian Brotherhood system, as sketched in advance by Carey, they sought to reduce expenses to a minimum.

A week after Carey arrived in Serampore a large house was bought, and there the six families settled down to live together. They dined at a common

table, a common purse held all their store, and a spirit of brotherly peace pervaded the whole company, with indeed one sad exception, for poor mad Mrs. Carey had to be secluded in her own apartment. An extract from Ward's diary gives us a glimpse of the simplicity and thoroughness of this common life :—

“ This week we have adopted a set of rules for the government of the family. All preach and pray in turn : one superintends the affairs of the family for a month and then another : Brother Carey is treasurer and has the regulation of the medicine chest : Brother Fountain is librarian. Saturday evening is devoted to adjusting differences and pledging ourselves to love one another. One of our resolutions is that no one of us do engage in private trade, but that all be done for the benefit of the mission.”

The domestic arrangements being completed, the missionary duties of the staff were in like manner planned and apportioned, when Carey's methodical mind and sound judgment came well in evidence. His own chief work was that of Bible translation : Ward took in hand the printing press and very soon the first Bengali Gospel was produced : Marshman gave himself to the study of the vernacular and the oversight of native schools. But in his case his special previous training suggested another outlet for his energy, and in 1800 he and his able like-minded wife, Hannah Marshman, opened a boarding and day school for European children. It met a want which had long been felt by the Europeans in Calcutta, and “ Marshman's Academy ” was quickly crowded with

pupils, the financial profit averaging for many years £1000 annually.

On Carey too fortune began to smile. Lord Wellesley, the Governor-General, was then engaged in his great scheme of establishing a college in Calcutta, for the training of the young civilians who came out to India. Quite unfit many of these were for the important duties into which they were immediately launched, and Lord Wellesley by this college sought to provide a three years' training in things Indian,—Oriental languages, laws, and customs. It was an excellent step, and resulted in a greatly increased efficiency in the civilian officers of Government, but it was no easy matter to furnish the college with a competent professorial staff. No post was more important than the professorship of Bengali, but the only qualified European who could be found for it was the humble missionary of Serampore, William Carey, and to him it was offered. Carey accepted it, with a hesitancy and a humble distrust of his own capabilities very characteristic of the man. Writing to Dr. Ryland in 1801 he tells how the step was decided on:—

“To my great surprise I was asked to undertake the Bengali Professorship. One morning a letter from Mr. Brown came inviting me to cross the water, to have some conversation with him upon this subject. I had but just time to call our brethren together, who were of opinion that, for several reasons, I ought to accept it, provided it did not interfere with the work of the mission. I also knew myself to be incapable of filling such a station with reputation and propriety. I, however, went

over, and honestly proposed all my fears and objections. Both Mr. Brown and Mr. Buchanan (Anglican chaplains) were of opinion that the cause of the mission would be furthered by it; and I was not able to reply to their arguments. I was convinced that it might. As to my ability they could not satisfy me: but they insisted upon it that they must be judges of that. I therefore consented, with fear and trembling. They proposed me that day or the next, to the Governor-General, who is patron and visitor of the College. They told him that I had been a missionary in the country for seven years or more, and as a missionary I was appointed to the office."

So began the connection of Carey with the college which lasted unbroken for thirty years, and proved of immense service to the mission in very many directions. Of the benefits derived not the least was that Carey now became personally known to all the best of the Government officials, and by his quiet gentlemanly bearing and unusual talents gained for himself, and for his work, an appreciation that stood the mission in good stead in times of trial. His intercourse with Calcutta society, into which as a servant of Government he was on official occasions obliged to enter, was naturally at first no small trial to the humble-minded man, whose walk in life had hitherto been confined to more lowly circles. But holding, as he subsequently wrote, that "a gentleman is the next best character after a Christian, and the latter includes the former," he never erred in his social life. A consistent Christian, he was always a gentleman, and never dreamed of turning his back upon his honourable though lowly past. "Was not Dr. Carey once a shoemaker?" asked a

fashionable visitor at Government House one day, when Carey was standing near: and Carey himself supplied the answer. "No, sir," he said, turning round and facing the flippant inquirer, "not a shoemaker, only a cobbler."

Of much gain too was the rapid and wide advances in linguistic studies which his college appointment rendered possible, by making them obligatory. Bengali, at the time of his appointment, did not possess a single prose work: its literature had still to be created, and Carey was its prime creator. To him was due the first Bengali grammar, to him a succession of works in Bengali first intended for use in the college, but rapidly obtaining a wider circulation, and to him the popularising of Sanskrit by the infusion of this classical element into the written Bengali of his own and subsequent days. Soon to his professorship of Bengali was added the professorship of Sanskrit, and Carey came to be recognised as the leading Oriental scholar of his time in India.

But most directly serviceable to the mission was undoubtedly the large addition to its resources which now accrued. Three days in every week were spent by Carey in Calcutta, and these over he sailed up the river to Serampore to his Bible translation and other missionary duties. For this service to the Government he received a salary of, at first, £600, which soon afterwards was raised to £1500. Funds were therefore ample, and as all went into the common purse the mission developments were



most materially furthered. It was a glorious exhibition of self-sacrifice. The Marshmans retained only thirty rupees per month for their private expenses, Ward kept twenty rupees, and Carey for himself and family retained fifty rupees,—a little more than the others in order that he might provide himself with suitable apparel for his work in the college, and for his official appearances at Government House. It has been calculated that from first to last Carey's contributions amounted to over £46,000, while from the Society at home the donations in the same period did not reach £2000. The Serampore Mission has left many lessons for later missionary enterprise, and one that is writ large, though not usually emphasised, is the exceeding power of the purse and the value of large resources in furthering the schemes of able and devoted workers. The splendid services of the Serampore brotherhood, invaluable for the Christianising of India, would never have been possible on anything like the same scale, had it not been for the money that, through their energy and self-sacrifice, was ever at hand to carry out the many projects of their fertile minds and devoted hearts. Good and faithful missionaries they would have been even had their sole support been that contributed from home, but Britain would not have been stirred by their doings, India would not have been startled from her sleep, nor would Christ's Kingdom in India have been largely advanced. The Serampore Mission, expecting great things from

God, dared greatly for God, and it was their self-earned and self-contributed resources that made it possible for the noble workers to give actuality to their lofty aims, and achieve the things of which their souls had vision.

#### IV.

The work of the mission was many-sided, and will be best realised by forsaking now the strict chronological order, and considering the leading lines on which it developed. In several of the developments Carey's colleagues shared equally with himself, but in others the progress was more peculiarly the result of Carey's own individuality and work.

In direct *Evangelistic Work* the Brotherhood were all alike active, but the soil was exceptionally hard. Lower Bengal, then as now, was a stronghold of Hinduism. The vastness of the population made a few individual conversions of little avail as a lever for moving the whole, while the prestige of the province throughout India owing to its geographical position, and the firm hold of Hinduism upon its favoured people, were strong impediments to the progress of Christianity. Were they not the beloved of the gods, for did not Mother Ganga flow through their land, laving their fields with her sacred water? Carey laboured in India for seven years without making a single convert, yet his faith

never failed. God's time had not come, but come it would, if only His servants kept true. And it came. In the end of 1800, a carpenter, Krishna Chandra Pal, a guru in his own sect, happened to fall and dislocate his arm when he was near the mission house. Thomas was called and went to his aid, and thus began an intercourse with the mission that soon culminated in the first conversion. Writing of it afterwards, Chandra Pal, by that time become the first native Christian minister in Calcutta, told the decisive act that marked his separation from the old ways:—

“One day Dr. Thomas asked me whether I understood what I heard from Mr. Ward and Mr. Carey. I said I understood that the Lord Jesus Christ gave his life up for the salvation of sinners, and that I believed it: and so did my friend Gokool. Dr. Thomas said, ‘Then I call you, *brother*!—come and let us eat together in love’. At this time the table was set for luncheon, and all the missionaries and their wives, and Gokool sat down and ate together.”

It was a momentous step. The whole town was horrified. That Hindus should break their caste in any way was not to be tolerated, and a mob carried two rash misguided men to the Governor. But General Bie in place of blame, gave unstinted praise to the two for the moral courage they had shown in being true to their convictions. And so the tide was free to flow. Krishna Pal was baptized with Carey's son Felix, and his family soon followed. Then came a Mohammedan, and a little

later the first Brahman convert Krishna Prasad, a fine young man who later became an able minister to his own countrymen. The infant Church was thus being formed of very diverse elements, but from the beginning Carey and his colleagues made it clear that in the Church of Christ social cleavages cease, for there all are brethren one of another. The note of *Caste*, which had worked such harm to the Church in Southern India, was in Bengal rigorously excluded. By this stringency growth was made much slower, but the healthiness and stability of the organism were ensured.

Yet growth was manifest. By the year 1810 there had been 300 baptisms, and every successive year saw an increase. In quality it may be doubted if, apart from the absence of caste evils, the general standard of Christian knowledge and life equalled that of the Church of Schwartz. The conditions as to baptism were less stringent, and the preliminary training less thorough.

“We think it right,” wrote Carey, “to make allowances for ignorance and for a state of mind produced by a corrupt superstition. We therefore cannot think of demanding from them, previous to baptism, more than a profession of dependence on Christ from a knowledge of their need of Him, and submission to Him in all things.”

As to the quality of the converts Carey has some very frank words:—

“Sometimes we have to rebuke them sharply: sometimes to expostulate: sometimes to entreat: and often after all to

carry them to the throne of grace, and to pour out our complaints before God."

But there were many others of a stronger type, whose growing faith and steadfastness were a joy to their teachers; and as the years went on the Church grew in spiritual depth and also in numbers. Not however to any great things in Serampore itself: the chief extensions were further afield. In course of time Serampore became the central of five fields—Bengal, Burma, Orissa, Bhootan, and Hindostan—the five constituting what was termed "The United Missions in India". By 1817 the staff of workers numbered thirty, of whom nine were from England, nine were Europeans or Eurasians trained locally by the mission, and twelve were native evangelists and ministers. These last were held by Carey to be the most important of all. In the diligence with which a native ministry was provided he was far ahead of Schwartz and the Southern Mission, and set an example which later missions frequently have failed to follow.

"We have availed ourselves," he wrote, "of the help of the native brethren ever since we had one who dared to speak in the name of Christ, and their exertions have chiefly been the immediate means by which our Church has been increased."

Of the many fields thus occupied through the enterprise and by the financial aid of the redoubtable three, all save one have ever since been the scene of aggressive and progressive Christian work.

From Bhutan alone had the mission ultimately to withdraw.

Side by side with this direct evangelistic work there was prosecuted a rapidly extending *Educational* enterprise, to which Carey attached great importance, and which attained remarkable proportions. In its fullest development it embraced three distinct departments, the Vernacular Schools, the Serampore College, and the Missionary Training Institute which was included in the college. Carey's early experiment in vernacular school work at Madnabati had convinced him of the extreme utility of this form of work, and when the richer resources and wider field of Serampore confronted him the experiment was repeated a hundred-fold. By the year 1818 the mission possessed 126 vernacular schools, with 10,000 pupils, all receiving an elementary education and also simple continuous instruction in the Christian religion and general morality. These schools, widely taken advantage of by the natives, were the very base of the mission's operations. Without them, wrote the missionaries :—

“The whole plan must have been nipped in the bud, since if the natives had not cheerfully sent their children, everything else would have been useless. But the earnestness with which they have sought these schools exceeds everything we have previously expected. We are still constantly importuned for more schools, although we have long gone beyond the extent of our funds.”

In thus fostering elementary education and combining it with systematic religious instruction, the Serampore missionaries were only following a line approved and practised by both Ziegenbalg and Schwartz; but when Higher Education was similarly linked with religious instruction, there was begun in India a line of missionary activity altogether new, one which touched different strata of Indian life and thought, and was destined to accomplish marvellous things. The Serampore College would probably have appeared in due course, as the natural crown to the steadily developing educational work of a lower grade, but the actual time of its establishment was in some measure due to the changed policy of the East India Company in the matter of educating the people of India. In 1813, when the Company's charter had been renewed, a clause had been inserted providing for the expenditure of £10,000 annually for developing native literature and fostering native education. It was intended, by those who secured the insertion of the clause, as a counterpoise to the other more famous clause that secured free entry for the missionary into India, but its beneficial effect, even from a Christian point of view, has been undoubted. At first, however, the anti-missionary origin of the grant appeared, by the money being used to create and foster a Hindu College in Calcutta. Carey's Serampore College, established in 1821, furnished a counterpoise to this. The college was planned on

a large scale, both architecturally and educationally, and remains to-day a noble testimony to the high ideals of the dauntless three. Its cost, £15,000, was defrayed by themselves, the outcome of ceaseless labour and self-denial: and the curriculum provided was worthy of the building. The study of English and the classical Oriental languages occupied a prominent place, and to these were added such subjects as Science, History, and Philosophy. A chair of Medicine was endowed by the Governor-General, and the college was raised to university rank by the King of Denmark empowering it to confer degrees. Students of all classes and religions were welcomed, but there was no dubiety as to the missionary aim pervading the whole institution. It opened in 1821 with thirty-seven students,—nineteen native Christians, and eighteen Hindus,—and though at no time were the enrolments really large, yet the college served well the threefold aim its founder had in view. What this was is stated by Carey himself in a weighty letter to the Home Committee written in 1827 :—

“Of the three objects connected with the College, the education of non-resident heathen students, the education of resident Christian students, and the preparation of missionaries from those born in the country, the first is not strictly a missionary object: the two latter are intimately connected with the progress of the good cause. The preparation of missionaries in the country was not so much recommended as *enforced* by the great expense which attends the dispatch of missionaries from Europe. . . . The education of the



increasing body of *Native Christians* likewise, necessarily became a matter of anxiety. Nothing could be more distressing than the prospect of their being more backward in mental pursuits than their heathen neighbours. The planting of the Gospel in India is not likely to be accomplished by the exertions of a few missionaries in solitary and barren spots in the country, without the aid of some well-digested plan which may consolidate the missionary enterprise, and provide for the mental and religious cultivation of the converts. If the body of native Christians required an educational system, native ministers, who must gradually take the spiritual conduct of that body, demanded pre-eminent attention. . . . We cannot discharge the duty we owe as Christians to India, without some plan for combining in the converts of the new religion, and more especially in its ministers, the highest moral refinement of the Christian character, and the highest attainable progress in the pursuits of the mind."

Sound counsel this for to-day, as well as for a hundred years ago.

In fostering the evangelistic and educational developments of the mission all three workers took an active share, but in two remaining activities, now to be noted, the chief part was played by Carey alone. Of these, one was the removal, or the abatement, of some of the more flagrant evils associated with popular Hinduism; in securing this we see *Carey as a Social Reformer*. Hinduism as now seen in India differs widely from the presentation of its life on which Carey looked. Those features which then struck horror to the heart of every missionary, and of every European until familiarity begat indifference, have since been swept away with a

strong hand, never to return. But a hundred years ago suttee, infanticide and other social tragedies were everywhere prevalent, and the Government did not dare to raise a hand or speak a word against them. But from the date of his arrival Carey never ceased to protest against their continuance, under the rule of a Christian Power. In 1799 he had seen one widow burned by the side of her dead husband, held down in the flames by the pressure of bamboos, and the horror of the sight never left him. He had to witness many such scenes, but after thirty years his representations, along with those of others, were successful, and in 1829 Lord William Bentinck, then the Governor-General, issued the decree which forbade suttee for ever in British India. Carey was then the Government translator, and when the order reached him it happened to be a Sunday. But off went his coat and he set to work. "No church for me to-day," he exclaimed, "a day's delay may cost the lives of more widows!" That very night the translation was in the printer's hands and ready for circulation, and thus terminated a practice, which, in British India alone, had caused an annual holocaust of over one thousand women's lives. Other notorious tragic abuses had been earlier ended,—the crime of infanticide committed by hundreds of Hindu mothers every year, as they cast their children into the holy Ganges, and the self-immolation of fanatics crushed to death under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut.

—and in each case their termination owed much to the persistent representations of the philanthropic missionary of Serampore.

But Carey's greatest work has still to be mentioned, his *Translations of the Bible*. A true Protestant, he held the Bible to be the best of missionaries, and amid his many duties he ever placed first the duty of translating the Bible into the languages of the people, and then circulating it to do its blessed work. His natural talent for languages helped him greatly, but without his indomitable industry, and systematic husbanding of every moment of his time, the talent would never have borne such bountiful interest. Even so his language record is amazing. Carey himself ascribed much to his knowledge of Sanskrit, that language forming the basal element in many others, and giving him, as he said, the meaning of four out of every five words in the principal Indian tongues.

“The peculiar grammar of any one of these may be acquired in a couple of months, and then the language lies open to the student. The knowledge of four words in five enables him to read with pleasure, and renders the acquisition of the few new words, as well as the idiomatic expressions, a matter of delight rather than of labour.”

This may be the judgment of an enthusiast as well as of a most rare scholar, yet it explains in some measure the remarkable achievements of the writer. With God's help, he resolved to translate the Bible

into every one of the principal languages of India, and so make it an open book to the whole land. That resolution he kept ; and in the keeping of it he was ably seconded by Ward, who was as zealous in printing the Bible as Carey was in translating it. "To give to a man a New Testament who never saw it, who has been reading lies as the Word of God: to give him these everlasting lines which Angels would be glad to read—this, this is my blessed work." So Ward wrote of his work to a friend in Hull, and it shows the man. Carey himself was not more earnest.

By 1811 there were nineteen printing presses at work, resulting in a steady stream of Biblical and religious literature in the vernaculars. In the following year a sore check was given through the destruction by fire of the printing establishment—the most serious loss of all being many of Dr. Carey's manuscripts,—but the loss turned out for the furtherance of the cause. Sympathisers in India and in Britain poured in their offerings, and the work was resumed on a greater scale than ever.

In all, thirty-six translations of the Bible in whole or in part issued from the Serampore Press in Carey's time. Of these the Bengali, Hindi, Marathi and Sanskrit versions were wholly the work of Carey ; others such as the Hindustani, Persian and Tamil he edited ; and still others were the work of sympathetic fellow-labourers enlisted by Carey in this most splendid endeavour of his life. A glimpse of

his busy life and his constantly widening outlook is given by a quotation from a letter sent to Dr. Ryland in January, 1808 :—

“Last year may be reckoned among the most important which this mission has seen—not for the numbers converted among the natives, for they have been fewer than in some preceding years, but for the gracious care which God has exercised towards us. We have been enabled to carry on the translation and printing of the Word of God in several languages. The printing is now going on in six, and the translation into six more. The Bengali is all printed except from Judges vii. to the end of Esther ; Sanskrit New Testament to Acts xxvii. ; Orissa to John xxi. ; Mahratta, second edition, to the end of Matthew ; Hindostani (new version) to Mark v. ; and Matthew is begun in Goojarati. The translation is nearly carried to the end of John in Chinese, Telinga, Kurnata and the language of the Seekers. It is carried on to a pretty large extent in Persian, and begun in Burman. The whole Bible was printed in Malay at Batavia some years ago. The whole is printed in Tamil, and the Syrian Bishop at Travancore is now superintending a translation from Syriac into Malagala. I learned this week that the language of Kashmeer is a distinct language.”

It hardly needs to be said that the translations thus rapidly carried through were not perfect. Carey never supposed they were, but their value in themselves, and also as foundations for more perfect work in subsequent years, was priceless. In each new edition as it came out Carey himself revised and improved the former renderings, his very last work being to revise the eighth edition of his Bengali New Testament. “Then,” writes Dr. George Smith, his biographer, “the venerable scholar, like Columba at Iona over the seventy-second Psalm, and Bede at

Jarrow over the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, said as he corrected the last sheet—the last after forty years' faithful and delightful toil—"My work is done, I have nothing more to do, but to wait the will of the Lord".

## V.

In the truly gigantic work which has been sketched, unparalleled in India for far-reaching influence, it is Carey the missionary who challenges and receives our unmeasured admiration, but of equal excellence was Carey the man, and his career abounded in experiences calculated to test his personal worth. For brevity's sake, in telling of the remarkable progress made by the mission along the various lines of work, we have had to pass over the many obstacles which had to be overcome, and in overcoming which the deepest qualities of the worker were tested. Yet these obstacles were both serious and numerous. There were times when the Government in Calcutta developed an anti-missionary energy which threatened to destroy entirely the mission work. Especially was this the case for some years after the "Vellore Mutiny" in 1806—wrongly deemed to be a result of Christian missions, though no mission existed at the place, but the Government, nevertheless, became nervously suspicious of all active Christian propaganda and sought to stifle it. Missionaries on arriving at Calcutta were shipped home again; all missionary preaching in Calcutta was pro-

hibited ; and a strong effort was made to silence the mission press at Serampore, and have it removed to Calcutta to be worked under a Government censorship. That calamity was averted by the resolution of the Danish Governor, so often in those days the mission's guardian angel. Then too there came a time of financial anxiety. The Government College at Fort William had its expenses cut down. Carey's salary was reduced to half : and at last the college was closed altogether. And, hardest of all his trials, there came a time in Carey's old age when as the tried friends of the mission in England passed away, Ryland, Fuller and others, new men arose who knew not Carey, who gave ear to faulty criticism passed by inexperienced new arrivals on the field, and who questioned and judged and rebuked where they had neither the necessary knowledge nor the necessary right. It was a bitterly painful episode in the mission's history and cut Carey and his comrades to the quick. Nothing ended it until they separated themselves and their mission from the home Society, and pursued their work on their own lines as an independent mission. But through all these trials Carey never wavered in his course, nor flinched from a duty because of hurtful criticism. He knew his work to be of God, and he did it, quietly and steadily, exercising a uniform gentle courtesy to all men that made him universally beloved.

Very charming are some of the glimpses we get of

him in his home, especially during the thirteen years of his second marriage. Poor mad Mrs. Carey died in 1807, and after some time Carey married again, his second wife being a lady of widely different origin and nature. She was Lady Rumohr, the daughter of a German countess, and more or less of an invalid, who had come to India in search of health and in a modified degree had found it. Intelligent and well read, of high culture and sweet disposition, as well as sincerely devout, the little invalid wife made an ideal companion for the gentle scholar, and their married life of thirteen years was one of rare happiness.

With the exception of his domestic joys Carey had one, and only one, relaxation from his missionary duties—horticulture. He was a keen and distinguished botanist and naturalist, and his botanical garden which he laid out at Serampore, covering some five acres and kept with the utmost care, became in course of years one of the scientific treasures in which the Europeans of Calcutta and Serampore took special pride. The Agri-Horticultural Society of India owed its existence to Carey, and his connection with it brought him into touch with learned societies in Britain and elsewhere, from which honours flowed thickly upon the humble missionary-botanist.

It is in connection with this phase of his life that the only sign is given that affection for the old English land never died out of Carey's heart. In



1820 some English seeds had been sent to him from home, and that nothing might be lost the very earth in the bag that contained them was shaken out in a shady corner of the garden.

“A few days afterwards,” writes Carey, “I found springing up, to my inexpressible delight, a ‘*Bellis perennis*’ of our English pastures. I know not that I ever enjoyed, since leaving Europe, a pleasure so exquisite as the sight of this English daisy afforded me: not having seen one for upwards of thirty years, and never hoping to see one again.”

For fourteen years more, after this touching little episode, he lived and toiled. More and more he became the revered father of all the missionaries who were now in increasing numbers entering India, since the Company's charter no longer gave the authorities power to exclude them. It was a privilege to hold fellowship with a leader so honoured, and to receive counsel from one so rich in experience and in wisdom. How sound, practical, and yet lofty and inspiring, was the advice he gave may be gathered from one or two extracts from his letters and journals. They reveal Carey as the *Counsellor and Missionary Sage*, and are worthy of consideration by even the most modern of his successors.

On the important matter of *learning the language* he writes in 1814 to his son Jabez, a missionary to the Malays:—

“Labour incessantly to become a perfect master of the Malay language. In order to do this, associate with the Natives, walk

out with them, ask the name of everything you see, and note it down : visit their houses, especially when any of them are sick. Every night arrange the words you get in alphabetical order. Try to talk as you get a few words, and be as much as possible one of them. A course of kind and attentive conduct will gain their esteem and confidence, and give you an opportunity of doing much good."

To two Burmah missionaries, after similar advice, he adds :—

"As soon as you shall feel your ground well in this language, you may compose a grammar and also send us some Scripture tract for printing ; small and plain ; simple Christian instruction, and Gospel invitation, without anything that can *irritate* the most superstitious mind."

His counsel on *missionary finance* is always timely :—

"Remember that the money which you will expend is neither ours nor yours, for it has been consecrated to God : and every unnecessary expenditure will be robbing God, and appropriating to unnecessary secular uses what is sacred and consecrated to Christ and his cause. In building, especially, remember that you are poor men, and have chosen a life of poverty and self-denial, with Christ and his missionary servants. If another person is profuse in expenditure the consequence is small, because his property would perhaps fall into hands where it might be devoted to the purposes of iniquity : but missionary funds are in their very circumstances the most sacred and important of anything of this nature on earth."

Equally wise is his advice on the delicate matter of the *missionary in Society*, given to his son Jabez in 1813 :—

“Behave affably and genteelly to all, but not cringingly towards any. Feel that you are a man, and always act with that dignified sincerity and truth which will command the esteem of all. Seek not the Society of the worldly men, but when called to be with them act and converse with propriety and dignity. To do this labour to gain a good acquaintance with history, geography, men and things. A gentleman is the next best character after a Christian, and the latter includes the former. Money never makes a gentleman, neither does a fine appearance, but an enlarged understanding joined to engaging manners.”

On the *greatness of the missionary calling* he was ever insistent. When his son Felix left the mission in Burma to become the British envoy at the Burmese Court, his father wrote, “Felix is shrivelled from a Missionary to an Ambassador,” while to his son William at another time he wrote :—

“Now, dear William, what do we live for but to promote the cause of our dear Redeemer in the world? If that be carried on, we need not wish for anything more. . . . Indeed, were you never to be blessed to the conversion of one soul, still the pleasure of labouring in the work of the Lord is greater than that of any undertaking in the world, and is of itself sufficient to make it the work of our choice.”

Happy indeed were those missionaries who got their first lessons in missions from one at once so wise and so devoted. And they knew it. No difference of sect stood in the way of the younger workers in Calcutta seeking counsel and inspiration from the aged leader of them all. David Brown, Henry Martyn, and Daniel Corrie, evangelical chaplains of the Church of England, were his close

and trusted friends. Daniel Wilson, the young Bishop of Calcutta, was a constant visitor at Serampore, and of him it is told that when he paid his last visit just a little prior to Carey's death, he humbly knelt before the venerable missionary and asked his benediction. But of all the visits then paid in reverent sympathy, none exceeds in interest that of Alexander Duff, the first missionary of the Church of Scotland,—the man who in God's providence was to take up the work where Carey laid it down, and carry it on a yet further stage. Long talks between the two had already taken place, in which Carey had bidden Duff "God speed" with the plans that were maturing in his mind. This time the talk had been of Carey's own life, and when Duff said good-bye and was leaving the room, the dying saint called him back. "Mr. Duff," he said, "you have been speaking about Doctor Carey, Doctor Carey; when I am gone say nothing about Doctor Carey,—speak about Doctor Carey's *Saviour*." It was a solemn monition which Duff never forgot.

The end came slowly on, its approach, from the closing months of 1833, being manifest to all. Of many treasured incidents of those last days, one may be quoted, as unveiling the innermost chamber of the soul of a good and humble man. A missionary of the London Missionary Society, Mr. Gogerly, was visiting him, and after sitting in silent awe for half an hour in the presence of one rapidly nearing the Unseen, ventured (though with

somewhat doubtful propriety) to ask a question as to the feelings of the passing saint in the immediate prospect of death.

"The question," he afterwards wrote, "roused him from his apparent stupor, and opening his languid eyes, he earnestly replied: 'As far as my personal salvation is concerned, I have not the shadow of a doubt: I know in Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day; but when I think that I am about to appear in the presence of a holy God, and remember all my sins and manifold imperfections—I tremble.' He could say no more. The tears trickled down his cheeks, and after a while he relapsed into the same state of silence from which I had aroused him."

On 9th June, 1834, release came. The spirit of the faithful worker passed to its Saviour, and in the cemetery of Serampore, in the presence of a great gathering of all classes, his body was laid to rest. Very simple was the service, but so had he requested in his will:

"I direct that my funeral be as plain as possible: that I be buried by the side of my second wife, Charlotte Emilia Carey; and that the following inscription, and nothing more, be cut on the stone which commemorates her, either above or below as there may be room:—

'William Carey, born August 17, 1761, died ——

A wretched, poor, and helpless worm

On Thy kind arms I fall'."

Humble to the end, and humble all through!  
Yet it was a humility that made for strength, for at the end, as at the beginning, and throughout the long years that intervened, it cast him upon God,

and in God's strength he had done marvellous things.

## VI.

There can be no difficulty in assigning Carey his place among the apostles of India: he comes *first*. Whether the view point be the home base or the foreign field the verdict is the same. Among the many great, who have striven to bring home to India the love and the power and the dominion of Christ, William Carey, in influence and achievement, is the greatest. It is not easy to estimate the comparative value to the missionary cause of the service he did in the home land, and that which he accomplished in the foreign field: but that both were of quite uncommon value is beyond question.

So far as the former service is concerned, that rendered to the missionary cause at the home base, three lines are easily distinguished. One of them is peculiar to Carey himself, and marks him off from all later missionaries. Those who followed him, even the greatest of them, went out at the call of the Church, addressed to them either directly or indirectly. The Church called and they responded. But Carey had to constrain the Church to issue the call. His was the impelling force that roused the Church from her inertia, and compelled her to see a duty of personal service laid upon her by the Christless condition of the heathen world. So far as Britain is concerned he is the "Father of Modern

Missions" in a very literal sense: not merely as being the first in an honoured line, but as the God-inspired and God-commissioned prophet, who by his summons and his example brought the line into being. This honour is his alone.

A second service rendered at the home base was one in which countless missionaries share, only it was performed by Carey at a time when it was particularly required. By his call to the Church he had kindled the missionary fire: but it was the remarkable achievements of himself and his comrades, regularly reported and circulated as they were at home, that kept the flame alive and fanned it into a blaze that has ever since grown greater. The words of Fuller already referred to, reflect the situation and indicate the service: "Your work is a great work, and the eyes of the religious world are upon you. Your undertaking has provoked many. The spirit of Missions is gone forth. I wish it may never stop till the Gospel is sent unto all the world." Church after Church in Britain, and beyond it, caught the inspiration from the story of the brave workers for Christ in far Bengal, and, as the magnitude of the enterprises inaugurated at Serampore became known and realised, men, women, and Churches set themselves to do their part in this noble world enterprise for Christ. It was the day of the formation of many Missionary Societies in Britain which have since done great things, and there is not one of them whose forma-

tion was not largely stimulated by the work and example of William Carey.

Yet a third service rendered at the home base must be mentioned. It was in connection with the passing of the Missionary clause in the charter of the East India Company, as renewed in 1813. That clause was the *Magna Charta* of modern Indian Missions, and Carey's Indian record had much to do with its adoption. In Parliament, when the clause was under discussion, the old cry of "Missions a danger to the peace of India" was freely raised. It had been so in 1793, the last occasion on which the charter had been renewed, and then, despite the evidence to the contrary supplied by the work of Schwartz and his fellow-labourers, the cry had triumphed. Now the work of Carey, an English missionary and in closest touch with the British capital of India, gave the example of what missions could do or not do for the peace and well-being of a country. Carey's name was freely quoted in the debate, his work was freely described and characterised by those who knew it not, as well as by those who knew it well. The men who had seen it on the spot and knew the worker testified to its worth, and demonstrated without difficulty the utility of the missionary and his work. When the vote was taken, these things were remembered, and the charter giving to the Christian missionary free entry into British India was granted.



It is less easy to tabulate the distinctive services rendered by Carey in the field : partly because they were so numerous and so many-sided as to defy condensed description, and partly, too, because later missionaries following in his steps have rendered services of a similar character, making Carey's distinctiveness lie largely in the priority of his work. But one has only to contrast his work with the work of Schwartz, under whom Indian Missions reached their highest until Carey came, to realise the vastness of the forward movement initiated at Serampore. Particularly is this the case along the two lines of work to which Carey attached supreme importance,—Bible Translation and Christian Education : and to these may be added, Christian Literature. Along each of these lines the Serampore missionary showed an imperial vision and genius and courage. By his Bible translations, circulating in forty tongues, by the manifold literary productions increasingly issued,—school books, scientific manuals, religious compendia, and not least periodical literature,—and by the provision of an education calculated to meet the demands of the highest grades of cultured Hindu society, Carey touched Hinduism with a wideness of reach, and a strong and healthy stimulus, quite unapproached by previous workers. He was to be followed by a missionary who, along one special line, was to probe India yet more deeply, and affect one important section of her people yet more markedly ; but as a centre of far-reaching

influence, as a pioneer in missionary work along many paths, nobly devised and nobly executed, and as a Maker of Christian India, William Carey holds, and will hold, the premier place among India's apostles.

## CHAPTER X

HENRY MARTYN

(1781—1812)

IN the long line of India's apostles Henry Martyn occupies a place altogether unique. Worthy as he is to be ranked with such great missionaries as Schwartz, Carey, and Duff, he yet differs from them all, and in the service he rendered to Christianity in India fills a rôle which but for him would have been left unfilled. Among Indian Protestant missionaries he had no predecessor, and has had no outstanding successor. His career abounds with anomalies which only bring into clearer relief the striking character of his work and influence. Technically he was not a missionary, but a chaplain to his own countrymen, yet more ardent missionary soul never tenanted mortal clay. His converts were singularly few, not more than five according to his own reckoning, yet the fruit of his life and labours is seen to-day to be of rare abundance. His career was of the briefest, extending over only six crowded years, yet in that time he won for himself a place among the immortals of the Church of Christ.

## I.

The period of preparation in Henry Martyn's life covers twenty-four years, and extends from the date of his birth, 17th February, 1781, to that of his departure for India, 31st August, 1805. He was born at Truro, in Cornwall, one of a family of four children, all of delicate constitution, of whom he proved to be the last survivor. His father was a man of Cornish mining stock, who had raised himself to the position of managing clerk in a merchant's office. Of high character and marked capacity, John Martyn prized knowledge and feared God, and by him his son's evident talents were carefully fostered, and a somewhat wayward, passionate temperament as lovingly schooled. Truro Grammar School gave the boy a sound preliminary education, and in 1797, as a lad of sixteen, Henry Martyn entered St. John's College, Cambridge. Up to this time no indication had been given of the future missionary, and indeed despite a father's counsels and a sister's prayers religion bulked little in his life. Nevertheless in those Cambridge years there were influences at work which were preparing him for his future, prominent among them being the discipline of study. The work which awaited him in the mission field was largely that of a scholar-missionary, and it was at Cambridge that the equipment in scholarly taste and intellectual power, which later bore so precious fruit, was fashioned. Yet two years of university life slipped away without any spiritual development

taking place, and it was not until the sudden death of his father, in January, 1800, that his complacency was shaken. His own account of this earliest moving of the spirit is curiously interesting: so slight and superficial does it seem, that one has difficulty in discerning in it the first stage in the spiritual progress of him who later became one of the saintliest of England's modern missionaries:—

“I was extremely low spirited, and like most people began to consider seriously, without any particular determination, that invisible world to which my father had gone, and to which I must one day go. As I had no taste at this time for my usual studies, I took up my Bible. . . . I began with the Acts as being the most amusing, and when I was entertained with the narrative, I found myself insensibly led to inquire more attentively into the doctrines of the Apostles. . . . On the first night after I began to pray from a precomposed form, in which I thanked God in general for having sent Christ into the world. But though I prayed for pardon, I had little sense of my own sinfulness: nevertheless I began to consider myself a religious man.”

A year later Martyn completed his University career with the highest distinction. Senior Wrangler, and first Smith's (mathematical) Prizeman, he was the leading man of his year, but the honours so eagerly contended for had lost something of their savour, and no longer constituted for the winner life's supreme satisfaction. “I obtained my highest wishes,” he wrote, “but was surprised to find I had grasped a shadow.” Further honours, however, crowded on him. Fellow of St. John's College in 1802 and Prizeman for Latin Essay, Examiner in Classics in

1803, and Examiner in Philosophy in 1804,—for a scholar of such brilliance the cultured ease and academic distinction of a Cambridge Don seemed the inevitable destiny.

But all the time another influence was shaping his life for yet higher things and nobler service. This was the evangelical ministry and personal friendship of Charles Simeon, the famous minister of Trinity Church, Cambridge. Simeon was the greatest force for Christ in the England of his day, a pioneer in the evangelical revival in the Church of England, and in his own Cambridge a centre of Christian influence of a most rare quality. Among the many undergraduates who were drawn to his church by the character and power of the preacher was Henry Martyn. Simeon's was the hand that guided him to Christ, and his was also the hand that pointed him to the mission field. By Simeon and other kindred souls "*The Society for Missions to Africa and the East*," better known in later days as "*The Church Missionary Society*," had just been formed, and in the Cambridge minister's preaching and conversation the claims of the non-Christian world were kept very prominent. The doings of Carey and his comrades at Serampore formed a frequent theme of comment and thanksgiving. Brainerd's life was a book of familiar reference, and in such an environment the soul of Henry Martyn leapt up in sympathy with Brainerd, and longed to emulate the splendid work of Carey. He offered himself to the Society as a missionary, but he was

still too young for Orders, being only twenty-one, and a time of waiting and preparation was spent as Mr. Simeon's curate.

In this period two events occurred which left a lasting influence on his life. One was his falling deeply in love with Lydia Grenfell, a young lady of his own county of Cornwall. Marriage did not follow, but the flame then kindled in Martyn's heart never ceased to burn, often with almost painful violence. Miss Grenfell was a woman of a noble nature, deeply religious, but morbidly introspective and distrustful of self. She too loved, not at first indeed with all the ardour of her young lover, but with an affection that steadily deepened with the years. Yet she would not marry him. To his entreaty that she would accompany him to India she gave no response, and the pathetic repetitions of the request, which year after year his letters from India contained, met with no better fate. It is the sad romance of Martyn's life. The reasons of the lady's hardness are difficult to justify, though not to understand. A mother's unwillingness to see her daughter go to India had something to do with it, but behind that was the lady's own morbid fear lest by yielding to this human love she should be doing dishonour to her love of God. With Martyn also this question ever recurred, and in the copious journals which were kept by both, it is pathetic to note the needless torture to which these two high-strung self-sundered souls subjected themselves. For Martyn, with his intense nature and his

habitual regardlessness of the common physical needs of life, it was nothing short of a calamity that he faced India alone ; and while his recurring moan over frustrated hopes is apt to beget some impatience in the reader, it only emphasises the seriousness of the blow that Lydia Grenfell dealt to the man she loved, when she decided that her higher duty to God forbade her to go to India as Henry Martyn's wife.

The other deciding event of this waiting time was the death of his sister's husband, which threw financial burdens upon Martyn. As a missionary of the young Society he could not possibly face these, nor was the Society ready to accept him. But, through Simeon, a way of action offered. A chaplaincy under the East India Company might be obtained, which would give opportunity for missionary work, while at the same time by its very liberal salary (in those days one thousand pounds) financial anxieties would be unknown. It was however the work and not the salary that attracted Martyn and made him consider the proposal. To India he felt he must go, if not as a missionary then as a chaplain with the soul of a missionary ; and on August 31st, 1805, on board the *Union*, one of the East India fleet of fifty transports, protected by five battleships, he sailed for the land of his desire.

To-day India is a fortnight's journey from Britain, and the voyage a pleasant experience all too quickly over. A century ago it was otherwise, and nine



months passed before Martyn landed at Calcutta. The voyage gave the young chaplain the first experience of his duties. On board the *Union* was H.M. 59th Regiment, and officers and men alike reflected only too truly the callous even hostile attitude to religion which Martyn was to face among his own countrymen in India. His mere presence on board their ship—the only chaplain in the whole fleet—was felt to be an infliction, and the captain of the vessel shared the feeling. One service on Sundays he was permitted to hold, but nothing more, and to show their contempt for him and his work the officers, though not attending the service, would sit near at hand, smoking, drinking, talking and laughing while the service was proceeding. To the Cambridge student and recluse the situation was torture and the task agony, but he never flinched. By his evident sincerity, by his unfailing readiness to serve his fellow-men, by his earnest preaching and his equally earnest practice he to a large extent lived down the open hostility. As a ship's chaplain under most difficult conditions, he ranks with the two saintliest of Rome's Indian missionaries whose voyage experiences were of a very similar kind, Francis Xavier and John de Britto. Yet all the time he was doing his daily round, India and its people were never long absent from his thoughts. Hindustani was a daily study, also Bengali and Portuguese, and no opportunity of talking with the lascars was let slip.

The voyage was an eventful one in that it gave

Martyn his one and only experience of chaplain's work on the battle-field. When Cape Town was reached the war with the Dutch was proceeding, and reinforcements from the fleet were speedily landed. They were in time to take part in the fight that gave South Africa to Britain. As chaplain Martyn was there, ministering to the wounded, comforting the dying, and burying the fallen : but that even then the missionary longing was dominant is shown by his own words written at the time :—

“I could find it more agreeable to my own feelings to go and weep with the relatives of the men whom the English have killed, than to rejoice at the laurels they have won. I had a happy season in prayer. No outward scene seemed to have power to distract my thoughts. I prayed that the capture of the Cape might be ordered to the advancement of Christ's Kingdom ; and that England, while she sent the thunder of her arms to the distant regions of the globe, might not remain proud and ungodly at home, but might show herself great in deed by sending forth the ministers of her Church to diffuse the gospel of peace.”

## II.

On 22nd April, 1806, the fleet touched at Madras and Henry Martyn received his first impression of India. Preaching in St. Mary's Church, Fort St. George,—the oldest Protestant church in India,—he delivered to his own countrymen his uncompromising gospel. Like St. Paul he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, and many trembled though more scoffed. But what impressed him most in these first days was the end-

less stream of native life that filled the land, and the vast magnitude of the task of those who would guide that stream into the Church of Christ.

“My soul was at first sore tried by desponding thoughts : but God wonderfully assisted me to trust Him for the wisdom of His dispensations. Truly therefore will I say again, ‘Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain’. How easy for God to do it! and it shall be done in good time. And even if I should never see a native converted, God may design by my patience and continuance in the work to encourage future missionaries. But what surprises me is the change of views I have here from what I had in England. There, my heart expanded with joy and hope, at the prospect of the speedy conversion of the heathen! but here, the sight of the apparent impossibility requires a strong faith to support the spirits.”

A month later he landed at Calcutta, on 16th May, 1806, and began his brief but memorable career. Its chronology is quickly stated, for in brevity it rivals that of his brother saint and enthusiast of earlier days, — Francis Xavier. From the day he reached Calcutta to the day of his death at Tokat, in the far north of Asia Minor, 16th October, 1812, is a period of six and a half years, and of these only four and a half were spent in India. His first six months were passed in Calcutta, and then came two and a half years at Dinapore. May, 1809, saw him posted to Cawnpore, where eighteen months of crowded toil and ceaseless striving broke down his feeble frame. By October, 1810, a sea voyage and long leave offered the only alternative to a speedy death. The leave was granted and deciding to spend

it in Arabia and Persia, concluding with a visit overland to England, in January, 1811, he sailed from Calcutta. Ceylon, Bombay, and Muscat were halting places on the way, and on 21st May, 1811, he landed in Persia, the country nigh to which some eighteen months later he was to find his grave.

That a life so transient should have left an imprint so indelible, and an influence so far-reaching, was due to the intensity of the man who lived it. At Cambridge he had been known as the man who never lost an hour in striving for academic success, and the same was yet truer of him when he came to strive for the victory of Christ. "Now let me burn out for God," was his secret prayer, recorded in his journal on landing at Calcutta, and the story of Henry Martyn is the story of that prayer's abundant answer. So strong was the spirit that tabernacled within his delicate frame, that he accomplished work such as any three ordinary men might be proud to have at their credit. The Chaplain, the Missionary-evangelist, the Scholar, the Champion of the Faith, and the Christian Saint, are all sides of his life and work that arrest attention by their striking quality. In the actual life they formed a rare and beautiful blend, but their individual importance is best realised by considering them in separate detail.

### III.

It is only fitting that among the apostles of India a *Chaplain* should find a place, for in the later de-

velopments of Christianity in India, chaplains have played a part of distinct importance. Their ministry to their own fellow-countrymen has been the main agency at work in fostering among these the religious spirit, and preserving Christian decencies of life, and ever since the number of chaplains became at all adequate to the needs of the situation, the old-time godlessness which Anglo-India flaunted in the eyes of the Indian people has largely disappeared. This itself has been no small gain to the missionary cause : and added to this indirect service has been aid of a more direct, though hardly more valuable kind. Many a small school for native pupils was begun by chaplains, not a few private inquirers were helped by them along the upward way, and chaplains' letters to the Church at home, telling of the vast and urgent need of India's people, had much to do with the uprising of missionary concern on the part of the Churches of Britain.

In our own day, when missionaries are numerous, the missionary value of the chaplain's service is less obtrusively apparent than it was a century ago. Then the only missionaries in India of English birth were the trio at the Danish settlement of Serampore. Chaplains were the sole spokesmen for Christ who were permitted by the East India Company to bear witness for Him within their territories. For long they were pitifully few in number, and often, it has to be confessed, regrettably lacking in spiritual force, but towards the close of the eighteenth century

better days dawned. The scandalous paganism of the life of many Anglo-Indians stirred the nobler members of that community to earnest endeavour for the removal of the stain. Governors-General of the high tone of Lord Wellesley and Sir John Shore, servants of the Company like Grant and Chambers, earnest clergymen like Claudius Buchanan in India, and Charles Simeon at Cambridge, combined in efforts of improvement, and secured a succession of godly earnest men as chaplains, from whose work dates the regeneration and rehabilitation of Anglo-India. Of these "pious chaplains" as they were designated, one of the earliest and best was David Brown. Coming to Calcutta in 1786 he had laboured for twenty years before Martyn's arrival, had gained the love and esteem of the whole community, had changed the face of Calcutta in the matter of religious observances, and had been a power for righteousness in the life of many an exiled fellow-countryman. It was a great advantage to Henry Martyn that he spent the first six months of his Indian life as the guest and friend of David Brown.

Martyn's very first sermon in Calcutta gave an indication of the strength and the weakness which all through characterised his work as chaplain. To the congregation it was as if John the Baptist had entered the pulpit. The accents of John the Beloved were not indeed wanting, but the Baptist's note of warning dominated over the Evangelist's note of wooing.

“Tremble at your state all ye that from self-righteousness, or pride, or unwillingness to follow Him in the regeneration disregard Christ ! Nothing keeps you one moment from perdition but the mere sovereign pleasure of God. Yet suppose not that we take pleasure in contradicting your natural sentiments on religion, or in giving pain by forcing offensive truths upon your attention—no ! as the ministers of joy and peace we rise up at the command of God, to preach Christ crucified to you all.”

The wisdom, even the justifiableness, of a young chaplain, not yet twenty-five years of age, beginning his ministry to a community whose personal acquaintance he had yet to make, with preaching so minatory and with an implied judgment so sweeping, will be questioned by many. But Henry Martyn was ever a Voice crying in the wilderness, and the main burden of his cry to his fellow-countrymen continued to be “Repent ye !” That the warning owed its insistence to the depth of the preacher’s personal conviction and to his acute concern for the souls of his hearers, was freely admitted at the time, and became more evident than ever when his journals were made known. There the stern preacher is seen on his knees in his own room, pouring out his soul to God on behalf of those whose sins he had condemned. And admitted too is the abundant need that Anglo-India had for plain words about sin, and earnest admonition to repentance. Yet one cannot but regret that in his sermons there was not mingled more of that sweet loveableness which was so marked an element in the preacher’s own character and life, and

which won for him the esteem and friendship of many noble men.

Dinapore was his first independent charge. There he proceeded in the end of 1806, to find himself entrusted with the spiritual care of two European regiments, numbering 1700 men and 80 officers, as well as the civil servants of the East India Company: an abundant sphere for any man, but the conditions under which he had to work were trying in the extreme to one of Martyn's intense and earnest nature. By comparison Calcutta seemed a paradise. There at least he had enjoyed the fellowship of kindred souls, David Brown, Daniel Corrie his old Cambridge friend, now his brother chaplain, and the famous three at Serampore. At Dinapore he was a lonely solitary. "I stand alone," he wrote to Brown, "not one voice is heard saying I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord." Apathy, indifference, even antagonism to religion met him on every side. There was no church, so prayers were read from the drum head. Since there were no seats for the troops and they wearied standing the chaplain was asked to omit any sermon,—a withering request to one burning to deliver his message to dying souls. Other damping experiences abounded, and rebuffs were constant from both officers and men. "A more wicked set of men were I suppose never seen," he wrote to Corrie. "At the hospital when I visit some go to a corner and invoke blasphemies upon me because, as they now believe, the man I speak to dies to a certainty."



Yet the leaven worked. The Sunday services were better attended, a decorum, if nothing higher, began to mark the Lord's Day, and here and there officers and men were moved by his teaching and influenced by his example. Yet it was depressing work for one man to face, and it was good that from two sources there by and bye came a cheering word and hand clasp. Corrie, his dear friend, was posted at Chunar not far off, and the two chaplains saw much of each other. The other heartening was even more valuable for it was more intimate. On its way to Cawnpore the 53rd regiment halted at Dinapore, and this gave Martyn an introduction to a couple who became his closest friends, the Sherwoods. Sherwood was paymaster of the regiment and both he and his wife were earnest Christians, devoted helpers in all good work. Mrs. Sherwood had also the gifts of a keen observer and a ready scribe, and it is to her that we owe the most vivid sketches of Henry Martyn which have been preserved.

"I perfectly remember the figure of that simple-hearted and holy young man, when he entered our budgerow. He was dressed in white and looked very pale, which however was nothing singular in India: his hair a light brown, was raised from his forehead, which was a remarkably fine one. His features were not regular, but the expression was so luminous, so intellectual, so affectionate, so beaming with Divine charity, that no one could have looked at his features and thought of their shape and form. There was a very decided air too of the gentleman about Mr. Martyn, and a perfection of manners, which from his extreme attention to all minute civilities, might seem almost inconsistent with the general bent of his thoughts

to the most serious subjects. . . . He was one of the very few persons whom I have ever met, who appeared never to be drawn away from one leading and prevailing object of interest, and that object was the promotion of religion. He did not appear like one who felt the necessity of contending with the world and denying himself its delights, but rather as one who was unconscious of the existence of any attractions in the world, or of any delights which were worthy of his notice. When he relaxed from his labours in the presence of his friends it was to play and laugh like an innocent happy child, more especially if children were present to play and laugh with him."

This is the picture of a saint, but of one who knew that the saint's rest would not be long in being reached. Already those who loved him sighed when they looked upon his wasting frame. Incessant labour, unceasing anxiety as to his work, and the exhausting influences of the climate which he took little care to combat, were rapidly sapping his strength, and the hereditary tendency to consumption became ominously clear.

In the height of the hot season of 1809 he was ordered to Cawnpore, and after a journey that nearly killed him,—“the hot winds blowing like fire from a furnace”—he reached his new station, where his friends the Sherwoods received him fainting and half dead, and nursed him back to strength sufficient for his urgent duties. It was Dinapore over again. The old opposition, indifference, and worse had to be faced, and were faced with a courage and a constancy beyond all praise, but which tried his declining strength to the uttermost. Frequently now failure of voice and pain

in the lungs made him break off in the middle of the open-air service—for here also there was no church,—recurring periods of absolute prostration were increasingly common, and as to his chaplain's duties he added unceasing labours of a missionary character, it is little wonder that at last there came collapse. After two years of strenuous work and much suffering sick leave had to be obtained, and on 1st October, 1810, handing over to his friend Corrie his charge, and with it the new church which he had at last succeeded in getting built, he left Cawnpore for Calcutta, to journey thence by sea to Bombay and the Persian Gulf. On the Sunday before he left, the new church had been opened. Says Mrs. Sherwood :—

“The bell that day sounded for the first time over the land of darkness. The church was crowded and there was the band of our regiment to lead the singing and the chanting. The Rev. Daniel Corrie read prayers and Mr. Martyn preached. That was a day never to be forgotten. Those only who have been for some years in a place where there never has been public worship can have any idea of the fearful effect of its absence. . . . From his first arrival at the station Mr. Martyn had been labouring to effect the purpose which he then saw completed, namely the opening of a place of worship. He was permitted to see it; to address the congregation once, and then he was summoned to depart.”

Writing to Corrie, when on the way down the river, Martyn's thoughts go back to that lasting memorial he had succeeded in erecting, and which continued to be the garrison church at Cawnpore until the Mutiny.

“There is a gate not paid for yet belonging to the churchyard, may you always go through it in faith and return through it with praise. You are now in prayer with our men. The Lord be with you, and be always with you, dearest brother.”

With his departure from Cawnpore, Henry Martyn's work as a chaplain came to a close. A more earnest and faithful minister of the Gospel has never toiled in Anglo-India. Yet the work he did and the record he left, as a chaplain, would never have kept his name alive in succeeding generations. As an effective Christian influence among the varied civil and military elements that make up Anglo-India, his friends Corrie and Brown far surpassed him, as have also many other lesser men. In truth, Martyn was temperamentally not specially suited for the work to which he was sent. Anglo-India may be led: it will not be driven. And the leading needs to be patient and prudent as well as earnest and sincere, if the maximum of success is to be attained. This means perhaps that a chaplain who, besides being earnest and sincere, is moderate alike in his teaching, in his expectations, in his demands, and in his satisfactions, will in the end succeed better and will influence more, than will one who lives in extremes. Henry Martyn was anything but moderate. His Indian life was one long extreme. Intense to a degree rarely met with even in the ministry, his soul demanded a field of action quite other than that supplied by his official duties, one higher, wider,

and deeper, and he found such a field—not in Anglo-India, but in India.

#### IV.

*A Chaplain with the soul of a Missionary* is a true characterisation of Henry Martyn, and surely it was the hand of God that sent him to India, at a time when no English missionary was tolerated in the dominions of the Company. From the day of his landing Martyn agonised for India. Its vastness oppressed him, its idolatry horrified him, its need rent his heart, and in the strangely suitable dwelling which was provided him at Calcutta earnest prayer for the people of the land went up to God daily, often hourly. The guest of Mr. Brown, whose home, "Aldeen House," was up the River Hooghly, not far from Serampore, he was given as his quarters a curiously picturesque old heathen temple or pagoda which, standing in the compound of Aldeen, had been acquired by Mr. Brown and converted into a dwelling-house. All its associations were a missionary stimulant.

"Thither I retired at night, and really felt something like superstitious dread at being in a place once inhabited, as it were, by devils, but yet felt disposed to be triumphantly joyful that the temple where they were worshipped was become Christ's oratory. I prayed out aloud to my God, and the echoes returned from the vaulted roof. Oh, may I so pray, that the dome of heaven may resound!"

The sights of Hinduism in the concrete with which he now became familiar, stirred him to the depths.

Visiting a heathen temple and witnessing the people bowing down before the idol, "a little ugly black image," he tells us :—

"I shivered at being in the neighbourhood of hell: my heart was ready to burst at the dreadful state to which the Devil had brought my poor fellow-creatures. I would have given the world to have known the language and to have preached to them."

On another occasion it was the spectacle of the immolation of a Hindu widow that horrified him. Of this he wrote :—

"I have just been interrupted by the blaze of a funeral pile within a hundred yards of my pagoda. I ran out, but the wretched woman had consigned herself to the flames before I reached the spot, and I saw only the remains of her and her husband. O Lord, how long shall it be? Oh, I shall have no rest in my spirit, till my tongue is loosed to testify against the Devil, and deliver the message of God to these his unhappy bondslaves."

With feverish energy he threw himself into the study of Hindustani, that his lips might be unsealed. Except as a missionary he could not live, and the formative influence that decided the special line of his missionary activity was supplied by the pioneer trio at Serampore, Carey, Marshman, and Ward. One of Martyn's earliest visits after landing had been to Carey, and from him and his comrades he had received a right brotherly welcome. "A young clergyman," wrote Carey at the time, "Mr. Martyn, is arrived, who is possessed of a truly missionary

spirit. He lives at present with Mr. Brown, and as the image or shadow of bigotry is not known among us here, we take sweet counsel together, and go to the house of God as friends." By this time the early days of obloquy which Carey had long endured were far past, and the great missionary pioneer stood high in the esteem of all whose esteem was worth possessing. As Professor of Oriental Languages in the College of Fort William, his influence was felt in many circles other than those distinctly missionary, and a liberal salary enabled him to push on with the great desire of his life—the translation of the Bible into all the principal languages of the Eastern world. Between Henry Martyn and the Serampore trio a warm friendship rapidly developed. He prized the privilege of personal intercourse with the very men whose doings had first turned his own thoughts to the mission-field, and they gladly received into their fellowship a man whose rare qualities and attainments made his company a delight. A preacher of the Gospel Martyn had ever to be, but his scholarly training, his genius for languages, and his fine sense of the spiritual content of words, marked him out as one who must be used as a translator as well. Carey's great translation scheme captivated his imagination, and he eagerly responded to the request that in its execution he should become a co-worker. When he left Calcutta for Dinapore it was with the understanding that he should first fit himself for, and

then accomplish, the task of translating the Bible into Hindustani, Persian and Arabic.

The work was herculean; all the more so when it is remembered that it was the extra task of a man charged with the arduous duties of his own special office. Yet it was in a great part accomplished ere the worker ceased from earthly toil. His first essay in translation was to render the Church Service of the Church of England into Hindustani. This was for the benefit of the native women connected with many of the English soldiers of the regiment, some by marriage, some otherwise. Martyn's sympathetic heart went out to these poor outcasts, and first of all Indian chaplains to care for them, he regarded them as part of his charge, and throughout his stay at Dinapore held every Sunday a service for them alone. Usually from one hundred to two hundred attended, but the work he himself confessed was one rather of faith than of sight. "The women come I fear," he wrote, "rather because it is the wish of their masters. The day after attending service, they went in flocks to the Mohurru. . . . May the Lord smile on this first attempt at ministration in the native language."

In his more purely missionary endeavours Hindus and Mohammedans were at first equally the objects of his attention, and at Dinapore and then at Cawnpore he established schools at his own charges for the boys of both communities. But soon the Mohammedans became his main concern. Of the Hindus



his hopes grew fainter as his knowledge grew more. "How shall it ever be possible to convince a Hindu or Brahman of anything?" he once wrote. "Truly if ever I see a Hindu a real believer in Jesus, I shall see something more nearly approaching the resurrection of a dead body than anything I have yet seen." To the Mohammedans he was much more drawn both by circumstances and by inclination. Dinapore was contiguous to Patna, a great Mohammedan centre, and the importance of winning for Christ these former masters of India was always before him. Then too his translations when finished would be mainly for the use of Mohammedan peoples, so it was a necessity to study Mohammedan life and thought. Thus it was that Henry Martyn became the first missionary to the Mohammedans of India in modern times.

In his translation work he was aided by two assistants, supplied by the Calcutta branch of the infant British and Foreign Bible Society, Mirza Fitrut a Persian of Benares, and Nathanael Sabat an Arabian. Both were remarkable men, though in different ways, and their daily association with their chief made them important elements in his life. Mirza was a Mohammedan, more than half-inclined to accept the Christian message, though to the end unable to take the decisive step, and an able Hindustani scholar. Sabat was a fierce untamed son of the desert, who had been converted to Christianity,

and had undoubted literary abilities, but his fiery temper, his abiding jealousy of any co-worker, his supreme satisfaction with his own work and his impatience of any correction, made him one of the most difficult of associates. How his vagaries tried Martyn may be judged by the following typical entry in the latter's journal :—

“Sabat has been tolerably quiet this week : but think of the keeper of a lunatic and you see me. A war of words broke out the beginning of last week but it ended in an honourable peace. After he got home at night he sent a letter, complaining of a high crime and misdemeanour in some servant : I sent him a soothing letter and the wild beast fell asleep.”

But then would come compensation.

“Sabat overworked himself and was laid up. He does his utmost. He is increasingly dear to me, as I see more of the meekness and gentleness of Christ in him. Our conflicts I hope are over, and we shall draw very quietly together side by side.”

The ceaseless, tireless energy which marked the days at Dinapore and Cawnpore may best be judged by a few extracts from Martyn's own diary, where the saint peeps out in the plain record of the worker.

“1808, *Jan.* 7.—As much of my time as was not employed for the Europeans has been devoted chiefly to translating the Epistles into Hindustani. The work is finished after a certain manner. But Sabat does not allow me to form a very high idea of the style in which it is executed. But if the work should fail—which however I am far from expecting—my labour will have been richly repaid by the profit and pleasure derived from considering the Word of God in the original, with more attention than I had ever done.

"*March 31.*—I am at present employed in the toilsome work of going through the Syriac Gospels and writing out the names, in order to ascertain their orthography if possible, and correcting with Mirza the Epistles.

"*June 1 to 4.*—Employed incessantly in reading the Persian of St. Matthew to Sabat. Met with the Italian padre Julius, with whom I conversed in French.

"*June 6.*—Going on with the Persian Gospel, visiting the hospital, and with the men at night. My spirit refreshed and revived by every night's ministration to them. Sent the Persian of Matthew to Mr. Brown for the press, and went on with the remainder of the Hindustani of St. Matthew. I have not felt such trials of my temper for many months as to-day. The General declared he was an enemy to my design in translating the Scriptures. My poor harassed soul looked at last to God, and cast its burdens of sin at the foot of the Cross. Towards evening I found rest and peace.

"*Sept. 25 to 28.*—Revising Arabic version of Romans; going on in correction of Hindustani: preparing report of progress in translating for Bible Society. Reading occasionally Menishi's Turkish Grammar."

The pace was killing but the ground was covered. By 1810 his Hindustani New Testament was completed and is still, in its revised form, widely serviceable. A little later followed his Arabic New Testament and also the Persian. In both these however it was found that Sabat's influence had been too strong. The Arabic New Testament was not sufficiently couched in the language of the people, its tone was too scholastic: and in the Persian translation Arabic idioms and words, strange to Persian ears, were of frequent occurrence. This judgment from the Calcutta headquarters, which many would have resented, was accepted by Martyn

as thoroughly just, and at once he formed his plans for removing the admitted defects from his work.

“If my life is spared there is no reason why the Arabic should not be done in Arabia, and the Persian in Persia, as well as the Indian in India. . . . Henceforward I have done with India. Arabia shall hide me, till I come forth with an approved New Testament in Arabic.”

Nothing could daunt this dauntless soul.

His rapid progress in Hindustani brought with it the ability so eagerly coveted, to preach to the people in their own tongue. Never was preacher more eager to tell out his message. It was not enough for him to use the opportunities that lay around him, he added to them : and in a manner so uncommon that the picture of Henry Martyn which has most impressed the popular mind is that of the preacher to the beggar folk of Cawnpore. Many who know little else about him know of this special activity. It was indeed a remarkable one. Every Sunday evening hundreds of the native beggars and religious vagrants assembled in front of his house, attracted by the knowledge that at the end of the preaching would come a dole of rice, and there heard the earnest appeal of an earnest man. Mrs. Sherwood has vividly described the crowd :—

“No dreams nor visions excited in the delirium of a raging fever, can surpass these realities. These devotees vary in age and appearance : they are young and old, male and female, bloated and wizened, tall and short, athletic and feeble : some

clothed with abominable rags : some nearly without clothes : some plastered with mud and cow-dung : others with matted and uncombed locks streaming down to their heels : others with heads bald or scabby : every countenance being hard and fixed, as it were, by the continual indulgence of bad passions, the features having become exaggerated, and the lips blackened with tobacco, or blood-red with the juice of henna."

One does not wonder that she adds : "When Mr. Martyn collected these people he was most carefully watched by the British authorities". They were the off-scourings of Cawnpore, and any gathering composed of such elements held possibilities of riot and bloodshed. But nothing of the kind came from Henry Martyn's meetings. That they resulted in much fruitage cannot be said, indeed it could not be expected. The seed sown fell for the most part by the wayside and was quickly carried away, yet here and there a grain fell into better soil, and at least one future worker for Christ was gained. Sheikh Saleh, a Persian and Arabic Munshi of Lucknow, chanced to hear the earnest young evangelist, and the words he heard led first to his conversion, and later to his enrolment as an active evangelist to his own people. With the mass it was otherwise ; they heard but heeded not, and Martyn knew it was so, yet his faith in the final victory never wavered. "Yonder stream of Ganges shall one day roll through tracts adorned with Christian churches, and cultivated by Christian husbandmen, and the holy hymn be heard beneath the shade of the tamarind."

## V.

On 7th January, 1811, Henry Martyn sailed from Calcutta. Writing at the time from Cawnpore to a friend in England, his brother chaplain Corrie said, "He is going to try sea air. May God render it effectual to his restoration. His life is beyond all price to us. You know what a profound scholar he is, and all his acquirements are dedicated to the service of Christ. If ever man, since St. Paul, could use these words, he may, *One thing I do*. But the length of his life will depend on his desisting from public duties." There is no doubt that short though was the time that remained, it was prolonged by the release which he now obtained from the physical strain of regular preaching, and the period that dates from his leaving India to the day he died was in some ways the happiest he ever knew. His life attained a unity of purpose it could not have before, for now he was a *missionary* and naught else. Some measure of health returned, and aspects of his character became prominent which endear him to us yet the more. Especially in this last period do we see in him the Gentleman of Christ, and the doughty Champion of the Cross.

That Martyn was ever a Christian gentleman needs hardly to be said, but he was too seldom in society sufficiently congenial to let his culture and refinement find easy expression. In the ordinary civil and military society of Dinapore and Cawnpore he shrank.

within his shell, and only in the congenial circle of the Sherwoods and Corrie did he emerge. At the end, the fates were kinder. On the voyage to Bombay he was the daily companion of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone who was then on his way to take up the duties of British Resident at Poona. At Bombay he was the guest of the Governor, Jonathan Duncan, and at Government House frequently met Sir John Malcolm, Sir James Mackintosh, and other Anglo-Indians of the highest type. On all he made a deep and pleasing impression. Elphinstone when on the voyage wrote of him, "We have in Mr. Martyn an excellent scholar, and one of the mildest cheerfulest and pleasantest men I ever saw. He is extremely religious, and disputes about the faith with the Nakhoda (the native ship-captain), but talks on all subjects, sacred and profane, and makes others laugh as heartily as he could do if he were an infidel." From Sir John Malcolm he received a valuable and hearty letter of commendation to Sir Gore Ouseley, the British Ambassador in Persia, which is especially interesting for the light it throws on the saint in society :—

"He has assured me and begged I would mention it to you, that he has no thought of preaching to the Persians, or of entering into any theological controversies, but means to confine himself to two objects—a research after old Gospels and the endeavour to qualify himself for giving a correct version of the Scriptures into Arabic and Persian, on the plan proposed by the Bible Society. . . . I am satisfied that if you ever see him, you will be pleased with him. He will give you grace before

nd after dinner, and admonish such of your party as take the Lord's name in vain : but his good sense and great learning will delight you, whilst his constant cheerfulness will add to the hilarity of the party."

Whatever intentions Martyn may have had as to avoiding controversy, it must be admitted that he failed to carry them into practice. Sailing from Bombay in one of the ships of the Indian Navy he first touched at Muscat,—the only time he set foot in Arabia,—then proceeding up the Gulf landed at Bushire on 21st May, 1811, a stronger man than he had been for many a day, and eager to use to the full his opportunities. But Bushire in the fierce heat of May was no place for a European, and after nine days' halt he set out on the toilsome and trying journey to Shiraz, the summer retreat of the Persian Court, the British Ambassador and his staff, and of all who could escape from the plains. From now onwards he discarded the European dress, and in compliment to the land that received him, and also to secure greater ease of intercourse, he became in outward things a Persian. Writing to Corrie he describes himself:—

"The Persian dress consists of stockings and shoes in one ; next a pair of large blue trousers, or else a pair of huge red boots ; then the shirt, then the tunic, and above it the coat ; both of chintz, and a greatcoat. I have here described my own dress, most of which I have on at this moment. On the head is worn an enormous cone made of the skin of the black Tartar sheep with the wool on. If to this description of my dress, I add that my beard and moustache have been suffered to vegetate undisturbed ever since I left India ; that I am sitting on a Persian carpet



in a room without tables and chairs; that I bury my hand in the pilaw without waiting for spoon or plate, you will give me credit for being an accomplished Oriental."

The days at Shiraz were the golden days of Henry Martyn's life. Sir Gore Ouseley was the essence of kindness, and Sir John Malcolm's letters of introduction to his old Persian friends were cordially responded to. One of these, Jaffir Ali Khan, became Martyn's host, and in his translation work his host's brother-in-law, Mirza Seyd Ali Khan, lent valuable aid. The translation received unremitting attention and it proceeded apace.

But the distinctive feature of his Shiraz days was undoubtedly the controversial discussions with the visitors who thronged about him, when Martyn stood forth as the Champion of the Cross against the Crescent. The discussions were none of his seeking: they were thrust upon him, and his journals and letters show how keenly they were taken up and how much time they absorbed.

"I am so incessantly occupied with visitors and my work, that I have hardly a moment for myself. I have more and more reason to rejoice at my being sent here: there is such an extraordinary stir about religion throughout the city that some good must come out of it."

It was quite a new atmosphere in which the ardent missionary found himself. The dogged unreasoning intolerance of any religious views other than their own, which he had been familiar with in his dealings with Mohammedans in India, was

unknown in Shiraz. There controversy was a delight to the tolerant Mohammedans of the Persian paradise. Like the Athenians of old they were eager to hear any new thing, and though just as unwilling in the end to embrace it, they loved to spend hours and days in friendly discussion. It was often a sad waste of time, but Henry Martyn could not decline the challenge or throw away the opportunity. In argument he was easily victor, even by the admission of his opponents, yet though convinced they would not be converted. "My labour is lost," he wrote, "except it be with the Lord. I have now lost all hope of ever convincing Mohammedans by argument." Private controversy was supplemented by public discussion with the Moojtahid of Shiraz, the highest dignitary of Persian Mohammedanism, and then by a famous pamphlet controversy with Mirza Ibrahim, the preceptor of all the Moollas. To an able defence of Mohammedanism by Mirza, Martyn replied in a yet more able tract. Neither champion convinced the other, but the courtesy and the earnestness manifested by both make the controversy noble and memorable. It is this episode that inspired the fine tribute to Martyn by J. W. Kaye, the Indian historian:—

"There is nothing grander in the annals of Christianity than the picture of Henry Martyn, with the Bible in hand alone and unsupported, in a strange country, challenging the whole strength of Mohammedanism to a conflict of disputation. He seems at this time to have possessed something more than his own human

power : so cool, so courageous ; so bold to declare, so subtle to investigate : astonishing the Mohammedan doctors with his wisdom,—gaining the confidence of all by the gentleness of his manners and the blamelessness of his life.”

On 24th February, 1812, his translation of the New Testament into Persian was completed. It is Henry Martyn's greatest literary contribution to the cause of Christ, one which was the crowning satisfaction of his life, and by which he being dead yet speaketh. It was his desire to present, in person, a copy of his work to the Persian Shah and also one to the Heir-apparent, but he got no further than the presence of the Vizier, who was accompanied during the interview by two Moollas of the bigoted argumentative type, and Martyn's fervent desire was refused. The scene of the refusal is most pathetic and memorable :—

“ My book, which I had brought expecting to present it to the King, lay before Mirza Shufi. As they all rose up after him to go, I was afraid they would trample on the book ; so I went in among them to take it up, and wrapped it in a towel before them, while they looked at it and me with supreme contempt. Thus I walked away alone to my tent, to pass the rest of the day in heat and dirt : what have I done, thought I, to merit all this scorn ? Nothing, I trust, but bearing testimony to Jesus. I thought over these things in prayer, and my troubled heart found that peace which Christ hath promised to his disciples.”

Two years later, through the kind offices of Sir Gore Ouseley, the rejected book did at last reach the hands of the Persian King, and was by him most appreciatively acknowledged. By that time Henry

Martyn had gone where the countenance of earthly monarchs is of no moment, yet it was pleasing to know that what his heart had so keenly desired was in a manner achieved.

With the completion of his great work there came to the exhausted worker an intense longing for home. "Oh, to be in England!" was his cry, and facing westward he set out. First to Tabreez, where the ever-helpful Sir Gore Ouseley was, and there it seemed that the end had come. For a month he lay prostrate with fever and drew very near to death, but to the surprise of all the fever left him, and though wasted to a skeleton he rose from his sick-bed eager for the further journey. With sad foreboding Sir Gore furnished him with all possible help in the shape of letters to Turkish Governors, to Armenian ecclesiastics, and to the British Ambassador at Constantinople; and accompanied by two Armenian servants and an official escort or *Mehmandar* procured from the Prince, on 2nd September, 1812, Henry Martyn set out on his long ride, with Constantinople, 1300 miles distant, as his goal. It was madness for one in his condition to attempt it, and the speed at which the *Mehmandar* Hassan compelled him to travel only hastened the inevitable tragedy. Pitiful in the extreme are the entries in his journal. Day after day he was dragged on at a remorseless rate, a dying man being hastened to his grave:—

“Set out at eight in the morning—travelled all the rest of the day and all night. . . . Hassan had no mercy.”

On 2nd October, halting at last, he craved in vain for a little privacy.

“My fever increased to a violent degree: the heat in my eyes and forehead was so great that the fire made me frantic. I entreated that it might be put out, or that I might be carried out of doors. Neither was attended to. . . . At last I pushed my head among the luggage, and lodged it on the damp ground, and slept.”

The final sleep was very near, and seldom could death, kind death, have been more welcome. On 6th October, at “a poor little village within the jaws of the mountain,” not far from Tokat, the last entry in his diligently kept journal is made:—

“No horses to be had, I had an unexpected repose. I sat in the orchard and thought with sweet comfort and peace of my God, in solitude my Company, my Friend, and Comforter. Oh, when shall time give place to eternity! When shall appear that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness! There, there shall in no wise enter in anything that defileth: none of that wickedness which has made men worse than wild beasts, none of those corruptions which add still more to the miseries of mortality shall be seen or heard of any more.”

*When* the end came, or *how*, will never be known. Whether the saint found deliverance when he penned these last words, or whether he was carried to Tokat where the plague was raging and there met his death, cannot be determined. All that is known is that in October, 1812, Henry Martyn died, and was given honourable burial in the Armenian church-

yard at Tokat, having lived but thirty-one years, in which he served his day and generation with most rare diligence and result.

## VI.

The legacy left by Henry Martyn to the Church of Christ has proved one of the richest and most fruitful ever bequeathed by a missionary of the Gospel. Considered in relation to the shortness of his life, and the exceeding brevity of his term of active work in the field, it is amazing in its fullness and its wealth of influence. The Church in those Eastern fields where he lived and laboured, his own Mother Church in the home land, and many other branches of Reformed Christendom, are all his debtors, and rejoice to acknowledge the fact.

To the Church in the East, in India and Persia and Arabia, his chief legacy has been his translations of Holy Scripture. To give the Word of God to men in their own tongue was ever his master-passion, for he rightly judged that this was the most fruitful seed that he could sow; and the mere catalogue of his works, with the dates of their execution, is evidence of the diligence and the richness of his sowing. In 1807, the year after his arrival in India, he produced his Church Service in Hindustani, and in the same language a commentary on the Parables. Two years later, in 1809, he completed the four gospels in Hindustani, and the following year saw

the completion of the whole New Testament. That same year he finished his Arabic New Testament, and in 1812 the wearied but indefatigable worker crowned his labours with his final translation of the New Testament into Persian. It would be difficult to find a parallel to these marvellous achievements. Needless to say the translations were in no case final. Of what translation can that be asserted? Successive revisions of every translation will always be called for, as the language of a people changes, and as the knowledge of the language on the part of the translator grows deeper and wider: and Martyn's work has not escaped from the necessity. Yet for his day and generation, and for many later days, his service in translating the Word of God has been of incalculable blessing to many souls.

It is however to his own Mother Church, the Church of England, that his richest legacy has fallen. To her Henry Martyn has been a spiritual dynamic of most rare potency, the energising force of which has never ceased to operate from the day he died to this present hour. More than any other man he helped to make the Church of England a *Missionary Church*. Before his day Missions, and especially Indian Missions, stirred her to no enthusiasm and drew forth few workers,—for India no workers at all. Nonconformists were indeed labouring at Serampore, and in the South of India German and Danish missionaries had for some time been toiling laboriously, helped by the sympathy of English

chaplains and in part supported by gifts from the Anglican Church at home, but that great Church had not yet been moved to give her own sons to the work. It was Martyn's life, and especially his life as revealed in his journals, that wrought the needed change. Well may the Church of England bless good Daniel Corrie for having rescued these precious journals from the flames. When leaving Cawnpore Martyn was about to destroy them when Corrie intervened, secured the packet and sealed it, saying he would keep it safely during the writer's absence. Three years after Martyn's death his biography was given to the world, written by his friend Sargent and copiously enriched with extracts from his journals. Seldom has a missionary's biography worked so mightily for the cause. The Church of England awoke to the consciousness that she had possessed in Henry Martyn a scholar of highest rank, a saint of the purest devotion, a mystic of the deepest order, and that this rare flower of her own producing, this scholar, and saint, and mystic, had lived and died for Missions! Everywhere men's hearts were stirred with sorrow, with admiration, with pardonable pride, and in the case of growing numbers with holy emulation. "Amid all the discords which agitate the Church of England," writes Sir James Stephen, "her sons are unanimous in extolling the name of Henry Martyn. And with reason: for it is in fact the one heroic name which adorns her annals from the days of Elizabeth to our



own. Her apostolic men, the Wesleys and Elliotts and Brainerds of other times, either quitted or were cast out of her communion. Her *Acta Sanctorum* may be read from end to end with a dry eye and an unquickened pulse. Henry Martyn, the learned and the holy, translating the Scriptures in his solitary bungalow at Dinapore, or preaching to a congregation of five hundred beggars, or refuting the Mohammedan doctors at Shiraz, is the bright exception."<sup>1</sup> The judgment here passed as to the Church's lack of hero-souls was disputable even at the time when it was written, but to-day it could never be seriously advanced; and so far as heroism in the mission field is concerned, it is largely to Martyn that the change is due. He has been the father of many heroes. The holy flame that blazed in him has kindled like holy fire in unnumbered hearts, and the Church which till then knew no missionary zeal is now the strongest missionary force in Reformed Christendom.

But Henry Martyn has left a legacy to others than the Church of England. What he has been to her, he has also been in only a little less degree to the wider circle of the Churches of the Reformation. Not Anglicans alone, but also Scottish Presbyterians, English Nonconformists, German Lutherans, and the Churches of America, have all felt his power and have rejoiced to follow the gleam which

<sup>1</sup> Stephen's *Essays in Eccl. Biog.*

he has flashed before their souls. In his lifetime he cared nought for differences of Church polity. A loyal son of his own branch of the Church, he was ever most brotherly in his dealings with men of other branches. "Where Christ is, there is the Church," was his working principle, and to-day all the Churches hail him as a brother and a saint. To this wider brotherhood his best legacy has been himself. That life of his so short in duration, so intense in its consecration to God, moves men's hearts to reverential awe in a degree rarely experienced in the presence of a brother man. It was so even in his lifetime, with those who knew him best and saw him oftenest. "A more perfect character I never met with, nor expect to see again on earth," is his friend Corrie's tribute: and equally high is the tribute of his brother-chaplain Thomason, himself one of the best, "Oh, for Martyn's humility and love! . . . His standard of every duty was the highest, and his feelings of joy, sorrow, love, most intense: whilst his conversation was always in heaven, the savour of his holy disposition was as ointment poured forth." To be in his company was to stand on holy ground. It is so still. Men read those precious revealings of his inner life which he has left behind him, and they know they are in touch with a child of God. Not a faultless child by any means, for blemishes and weaknesses are easily visible, and by the man himself they were readily acknowledged, but none the less a child of God, who

endured as seeing the Invisible, and exercised on earth the power that comes from looking on the Unseen.

“ A poet with the contemplative gaze  
And listening ear, but quick of force and eye,  
Who fought the wrong without, the wrong within,  
And being a pure saint, like those of old,  
Abased himself and all the precious gifts  
God gave him, flinging all before the feet  
Of Him whose name he bore,—a fragile form  
Upon whose hectic cheek there burned a flush  
That was not health : who lived as Xavier lived,  
And died like him upon the burning sands,  
Untended, yet whose creed was far from his  
As pole from pole : whom grateful England still  
Loves.

“ The awakened gaze  
Turned wholly from the earth, on things of heaven  
He dwelt both day and night. The thought of God  
Filled him with infinite joy : his craving soul  
Dwelt on Him as a feast : as did the soul  
Of rapt Francesco in his holy cell  
In blest Assisi : and he knew the pain  
The deep despondence of the Saint, the doubt,  
The consciousness of dark offence, the joy  
Of full assurance last, when heaven itself  
Stands open to the ecstasy of faith.

“ The relentless lie  
Of Islam . . . he chose to bear, who knew  
How swift the night should fall on him, and burned  
To save one soul alive while yet 'twas day.

“ The woman of his love  
Feared to leave all, and give her life to his,

And both to God : his sisters passed away  
To heaven, nor saw him more. There seemed on earth  
Nothing for which to live, except the Faith,  
Only the Faith, the Faith ! until his soul  
Wore thin her prison bars, and he was fain  
To rest awhile, or work no more the work  
For which alone he lived.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lewis Morris, “A Vision of Saints”.

## CHAPTER XI

ALEXANDER DUFF

(1806—1878)

THE Christian Apostles of India have been drawn from a surprising variety of lands and nationalities. Syria, Egypt, Persia, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Denmark, and England have each in turn made notable contributions to what is a truly great succession. Scotland's special contribution was not made until the nineteenth century was one-third over, yet in respect of the influence he exercised in India, the man she then sent forth as an apostle to that land ranks as one of the chiefest of them all, and along his own line of influence has no peer.

To-day, in proportion to her population and wealth, Scotland's gifts in men and money to Christian Missions give her an honourable place among Protestant lands, when these are considered from a missionary standpoint: yet her Church was comparatively late in acknowledging its missionary obligations. In 1796 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland engaged in a debate on Foreign

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Missions which has attained historic celebrity mainly from the character of some of the speeches which were then delivered. A prominent minister, Mr. George Hamilton, declared that "to spread the knowledge of the Gospel among heathen and barbarous people, seemed to him highly preposterous, in so far as it anticipates—nay, as it seems reverses—the order of nature. Men must be polished and refined before they can be enlightened in religious truth." To hold a collection for Foreign Missions, as was proposed, he declared to be "extraordinary and romantic". To-day his views seem most extraordinary for a Christian minister ever to have expressed, and, though they found some support, one is glad to know that they were not endorsed by the vote of the Assembly. Yet the decision come to was poor enough. The Assembly approved of Foreign Missions in theory, commended the practice of prayer for the extension of Christ's Kingdom, and pledged the Church to give practical assistance, at some future and more convenient season. Nearly thirty years had to pass before the said season arrived, but in the period intervening the Scottish Church had learned a good deal. Carey's brilliant work had become known, and the operations of the young English Missionary Societies,—the Baptist Missionary Society, founded in 1792, the London Missionary Society in 1795, and the Church Missionary Society in 1799,—had grown familiar through their mis-

ries' Reports, and other publications. The two Scottish Societies, the Scottish Missionary Society, and the Glasgow Missionary Society, founded in 1796—the very year of the abortive debate in the Assembly,—had leavened the Church with their spirit, and a widely different atmosphere was the consequence. Missions were no longer “extraordinary” or “romantic”: they had become familiar and desirable.

Evidence of the change appeared when the next Foreign Mission debate took place in the Assembly, which was in 1824, twenty-eight years after the previous *fiasco*. The division of the Church into two great parties, the “Moderates” and the “~~Evangelicals~~,” which in 1843 was to have a momentous issue, was already marked, but there was no division on the question of the Church's missionary duty. The leader of the Moderate party, Dr. Inglis, was the chief exponent of the missionary cause, and the Assembly unanimously approved of his proposal that a collection for Foreign Missions be held throughout the Church, and that a Committee be appointed to prepare a scheme of missionary work. That was the initial step; the next five years were years of preparation and elaboration. The collections came in until over £7000 was in hand. The locality of the mission was decided—mainly as the result of an appeal from Dr. Bryce, the senior chaplain of the Church of Scotland at Calcutta: *Bengal* was to be the favoured spot. The distinc-

tive policy of the Mission was settled in accordance with the traditional character of the Scottish nation : it was to be *Educational*. Said Dr. Inglis in the report of his Committee, "It is desirable to establish one central seminary of education with branch schools in the surrounding country". Funds, locality, and the elements of the policy having been thus arranged, when in 1728 the missionary was found who was to launch the undertaking, all things were ready. This missionary was *Alexander Duff*, a young man of twenty-two years of age, who was then finishing his course as a student of Divinity at the University of St. Andrews.

# I.

Duff was a Highlander, the son of a Perthshire farmer, who had given his boy as good an education and as careful a religious training as it was possible for him to receive : and Duff had profited by this parental solicitude, which he ever referred to with deep gratitude. At school at Kirkmichael and Perth, and also at the University of St. Andrews, he took the leading place among his fellows and long before his course was finished he was a marked man. To a keen intellect and cultivated mind he added unusual power of work, striking eloquence of speech, conspicuous influence over his fellow-men, and deep religious feeling. At St. Andrews he came under the influence of Dr. Chalmers, and may be reckoned as the greatest of that great man's spiritual sons.



Chalmers was his model, his ideal, and his adviser, and when the invitation came to Duff to go out to India as the first missionary of the Scottish Church since the Reformation, he delayed his answer until he consulted Chalmers as to his fitness for this novel and important work. Chalmers' reply was an enthusiastic "God speed," and on 19th September, 1829, having been previously ordained, and also married, by his revered professor, Duff with his wife sailed for India. Two utterances of his may be quoted, as revelations of the inner workings of the soul of the young missionary, on the eve of his departure. Preaching in the old church of Leuchars, the church of Alexander Henderson, he told what made him a missionary :—

"There was a time, when I had no care or concern for the heathen : that was a time when I had no care or concern for my own soul. When by the grace of God I was led to care for my own soul, then it was I began to care for the heathen abroad. In my closet, on my bended knees, I then said to God, 'O Lord, Thou knowest that silver and gold to give to this cause I have none ; what I have I give unto Thee,—I offer Thee myself. Wilt Thou accept the gift?'"

The other extract is from a letter to his father, and reveals the spirit of the crusader :—

"Pray with redoubled earnestness, that I may be strengthened, with all might in the inner man, and with all grace and all divine knowledge, that I may be enabled to approve myself a good and valiant soldier of the Cross—and not merely a common soldier, but a champion."

The prayer was abundantly answered.

The voyage was marked by more incident than was desired, for before Calcutta was reached Duff had twice suffered shipwreck. On a sandbank off Cape Colony the ship became a total wreck, and of all Duff's baggage the only article saved was a presentation copy of the Bible, which was washed ashore, having been preserved from hurt by the stoutness of its wrapping. All his carefully selected library of 800 volumes and all his precious manuscripts were lost. The Word of God alone remained, and this Duff took as a sign of what should be his main support, and the burden of his missionary message. After some delay at the Cape the shipwrecked passengers proceeded eastward in another Indiaman, only to suffer shipwreck a second time as the vessel entered the dangerous navigation of the Hooghly. The season was far advanced, for it was the end of May. The monsoon had burst, the Hooghly was in full flood, and amidst torrents of rain and a wild storm of wind the drenched and miserable travellers were hastily put ashore, thankful for the only shelter they could get, which strangely enough was the heathen temple of a neighbouring village. It was a rough welcome to India,—softened by the warm greetings received next day in Calcutta,—but the natives were impressed by the fact that so many perils had been surmounted. “Surely,” they said, “this man is a favourite of the gods, who must have some notable work for him to do in India.”

## II.

Duff had come to India with a very free hand as to the methods he should adopt. Beyond instructions to make Education a prominent feature in his work, and to begin operations at some distance from Calcutta, everything was left to his own judgment. The Church had confidence in her missionary, and it was amply justified.

The first six weeks were devoted to a detailed study of the situation. Every mission in Calcutta and the neighbourhood was visited, and every missionary was interviewed. Intercourse was also sought with English-speaking Hindus, and a good general idea was obtained of the methods hitherto employed, the results which had been achieved,—and the results which had not been achieved, but which by other methods might be reasonably expected. By the end of the six weeks Duff had decided his plan of action. It necessitated a breach of one of the two home instructions, for he decided that his work must be in Calcutta itself, the centre of Hindu life and thought, and not at any outlying post: but this step he did not hesitate to take.

The aim he set before him was to capture the *intellect* of India, which meant then, what though in a somewhat modified degree it means still, the Brahman community. Like de Nobili two centuries before, Duff saw clearly that that community was the mainstay of Hinduism, and that as yet it had

scarce been touched by missionary effort. Where others had failed he hoped to succeed, by adopting the entirely novel method of educating this community in the knowledge of the West. Such education would, he thought, inevitably destroy their belief in Hinduism, which in its theology and its tales outraged truth and morality at every turn, and accompanied and penetrated as his instruction would be with Christian teaching, the natural issue would be the acceptance of the religion of Christ. Only let the light shine, and the darkness would fly away.

But a second question had to be decided. In what language was this instruction to be given? Duff had a choice of three languages,—Bengali, Sanskrit, and English. The first was the chief medium of instruction employed at the Serampore College, but Duff discarded it. Bengali, the vernacular of the people, had indeed accumulated a much enhanced literature since Carey became its foster parent, but even so, it was a scanty literature and not yet indigenous; nor was the language sufficiently developed to be a good medium of instruction in Western science and philosophy. Duff's experience in his own Scotland stood him in good stead here:—

“As a native of the Highlands, I vividly realised the fact that the Gaelic language, though powerful for lyric and other poetry, and also for popular address, contained no works that could possibly meet the objects of a higher and comprehensive education. Hence those who sought that found it in English Colleges, and returned as teachers and preachers to distribute the treasures

of knowledge acquired through English, among the Gaelic people."

For elementary schools, such as were all the other mission schools in Calcutta, Bengali might suffice, and be the absolutely best, but not for an institution of the higher type which Duff contemplated. So the choice came to be between Sanskrit and English. Sanskrit was the language in use at the Government or Hindu College and also largely at Serampore, for the star of Orientalism was still in the ascendant. But as a medium for imparting to the Hindus all the wealth of modern Western knowledge, Duff felt that Sanskrit was not to be compared with English. So against all precedent, and also against the advice of all the missionaries—with the important exception of the aged Carey, who heartily approved,—this intrepid and far-seeing young Scot, when only twenty-four years of age, announced that he would open in Calcutta an institution for the higher education of the Hindu community, the lessons to be given in English, and to be accompanied by instruction in the Christian religion. With the other and older methods of mission work, he had no quarrel. They had their place, and he readily and warmly acknowledged it. To the missionaries labouring by direct evangelistic methods, he said :—

"While you engage in directly separating as many precious atoms from the mass, as the stubborn resistance to ordinary appliances can admit, we shall, with the blessing of God, de-

vote our time and strength to the preparing of a mine, and the setting of a train, which shall one day explode and tear up the whole from its lowest depths."

In initiating this revolutionary departure in missionary methods Duff's greatest help came not from any brother missionary, but from the famous Hindu eclectic, Raja Rammohun Roy,—a man who has been fittingly termed the "Erasmus of India". From his ancestral Hinduism Rammohun Roy had advanced to the position of a Unitarian in belief, and a Christian in moral ideals and spiritual sympathies. A frequent worshipper in St. Andrew's Church, Calcutta, he soon came in contact with Duff, took to him at once, and gave him invaluable assistance in starting his work. By his aid a hall was secured; through his personal influence with his friends the first five pupils were enrolled, with whom the school opened on 12th July, 1830; and by his wise persuasive counsel the first difficulty caused by the religious instruction was overcome. The Brahman youths murmured when on the opening day Duff put a copy of the Gospel into their hands, and asked them to read. "This is the Christian Shaster," they protested, "we are not Christians: how can we read it? It may make us Christians, and our friends will drive us out of the caste!" Calmly Rammohun Roy, who was present, allayed the storm. "Christians," he said, "like Dr. Horace Wilson have studied the Hindu Shasters, and you know he has not become a Hindu. I myself have read all the Koran again

and again, and has that made me a Musulman? Nay, I have studied the whole Bible, and you know I am not a Christian. Why then do you fear to read it? Read and judge for yourselves."

The danger point being passed the lesson went on, and the greatest missionary experiment India has ever witnessed was begun. Its success was instantaneous. Within a week the applicants for admission rose to 300, and every day brought additions. It became possible and necessary to make a selection, and with an attendance of 250 eager and ardent students the "General Assembly's Institution," as it was termed, was established. Every day opened with an hour's instruction in the Bible, which ever remained the chief lesson of the day. At this hour Rammohun Roy himself was frequently present, profiting by the earnest expositions of Duff. Hard steady work occupied the rest of the six hours' day, in which Duff had only the assistance of a young Eurasian lad. The other missionaries still kept aloof, and their criticisms were doubting or hostile. "You will deluge Calcutta with rogues and villains," said one. But Duff held on his way, and after a year's hard work his first triumph came.

In a large hall in Calcutta, specially hired for the day, a public examination of the pupils was held, in the presence of many influential Hindus and Europeans. Archdeacon Corrie, Henry Martyn's friend, occupied the chair, and Duff proceeded to put his pupils through an examination in the subjects

they had studied—English Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic and such subjects—with results that amazed the audience. But the climax came when the Scripture lesson was given, and the youths showed an acquaintance with and an appreciation of the Christian religion, such as none had thought possible. Calcutta next day was full of the brilliant success. Many Christians saw visions and dreamed dreams of a coming millennium, and the Hindus began to be seriously apprehensive of whereunto this thing might grow. Yet so highly did they value the English education, that they stilled their fears, and Duff could have filled his school twice over.

The *educational* success of the new method was triumphantly proved: but what of the *spiritual* results? In the inner life and expressed sympathies of the young men such results were abundant, and ere long took a concrete form which was yet more convincing,—and first in connection with another part of Duff's labours. In conjunction with Arch-deacon Dealtry and two missionaries of the London Mission, Mr. Adam and Mr. Hill, Duff planned a course of lectures to educated Hindus on "Natural and Revealed Religion". The introductory lecture was given by Mr. Hill in Duff's own house, when some twenty students were present, a number of them being from the *Hindu* College! This, when it got known next day, was too much for the orthodox Hindu community, and a perfect storm of opposition



to Duff and his mission arose, which compelled the abandonment of the lectures. But the storm had other quite unlooked-for results. It stirred the young free-thinking Hindus to plain, even bitter, speaking against the bigotry of the orthodox party, and provoked some of the more ardent amongst them to a reckless defiant act which had momentous consequences. To show their complete emancipation from, and contempt for, the bigoted customs of the orthodox, a party of these young bloods met one night in the house of Krishna Mohun Bannerjea, the editor of a Liberal paper, "The Enquirer," and a Koolin Brahman, the very highest caste. Bannerjea happened to be absent, but his self-invited visitors, procuring from the bazaar some cow's flesh, cooked and ate it! It was an act of social and eternal suicide for caste Hindus. What remained of the meat they then took and flung into the neighbouring courtyard of a holy Brahman's house, shouting in derision, "There is beef! There is beef!" Nothing could atone for such an act. The whole Hindu community was outraged by this defiling slight on one of their number, and its wrath fell heaviest on young Bannerjea, who personally was guiltless. Yet he was driven from home and family and friends: not a Christian at that time, yet not a Hindu, but a believing Theist. To him in his distress, when every Hindu door was closed against him, Duff's door opened, and an intercourse began which culminated later in the accession to the Church of



now undeniable, and the hands of the "Anglicists" among the Government officials, chief of whom was Charles Trevelyan, were greatly strengthened. It only needed the arrival of Macaulay in Calcutta, at this critical juncture, to bring the Government to a definite decision. Macaulay had come out as Law Member of the Council, and gave his whole weight to the side of the Anglicists. Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, already a sympathiser, became completely convinced of the advantages that would result from the change, and in March, 1835, a memorable minute, penned by Macaulay, announced the Government's decision. It declared that the main portion of the funds at the disposal of Government, for educational purposes, was to be "henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English Literature and Science, through the medium of the English language".

No decree of greater consequence to India has ever been signed, for that, more than any other single cause, has made India what it is to-day. "Never on this earth," says Sir John Seely, "was a more momentous question discussed. . . . Macaulay's minute remains the great landmark in the history of our Empire considered as an institute of civilisation. It marks the moment when we deliberately recognised that a function had developed on us in Asia, similar to that which Rome fulfilled in Europe." Duff's estimate of the importance of the action of Government, though more moderately ex-

pressed, is similarly high. With prophetic insight he wrote at the time:—

“We do not expect sudden or instantaneous changes, but we do look forward to a great ultimate revolution. We do regard the Lord W. Bentinck’s Act as laying the foundation of a train of causes which may for a time operate so insensibly as to pass unnoticed by careless or casual observers, but not the less surely as concerns the great and momentous issue.”

It opened the door into the mind of India through which have poured in ever-swelling flood, the knowledge, the ideas, the institutions and the aspirations of the Western world: and how these have changed India and are still changing it, everybody knows. Let it not be forgotten that to Alexander Duff, in a very great measure, this notable change is due.

Four years of such epoch-making labour involved a strain on the physical strength of the worker, that had to be paid for. In 1834 Duff was prostrated by a severe attack of dysentery, and in July, as the only chance of saving his life, he was placed on board a vessel, bound for home. The work, so dear to his heart, was left in the hands of his devoted and scholarly colleague, Mr. W. S. McKay, who by this time had joined him from Scotland.

### III.

Duff’s life is divided into a series of alternating periods of work in India and work in Scotland. In its importance to the Christian Church the quadrennium we have been surveying eclipses any other

period in his life ; indeed it might be truly said to eclipse all the other periods together. And yet in themselves they too were important, especially that which now began in Scotland. In India he had been a Missionary Apostle : to Scotland he was an Apostle of Missions.

Most Anglo-Indians know what it is to return home on their first furlough,\*full of enthusiasm over India and their work there, and to be met with a courteous indifference to all things Indian. They know too the calm assumption of the supreme importance of the most parochial matters at home, as compared with movements of imperial interest abroad. To the majority this reception acts as a cold douche, and they subside into silence, thinking their own thoughts. Of this chilling nature was the welcome Duff experienced, when on Christmas Day, 1834, fairly restored in health by his five months' voyage round the Cape, he arrived in Scotland. A parliamentary election was in full swing, the first held under the Reform Act : and, as if this was not enough excitement, the "*Ten Years Conflict*" in the Scottish Church had begun. In stirring days like those, who had time to be interested in the conversion of a few Hindus in far Bengal? Inglis would have found time, but he was dead ; Chalmers did find time and so did a few others, but for the most part there was blank indifference. It was a bitter disappointment to the ardent young missionary, who knew so well the vast meaning for future ages of that work in

India, but he wasted no time in lamentations. The task that lay before him was unmistakable; it was to wake the Scottish people out of their apathy and rouse their Church to a sense of her missionary duty, and at once Duff entered upon it.

In the General Assembly of 1835 he had his first great opportunity, and the manner in which that opportunity was used forms one of the proudest memories of that venerable court. In a speech of unexcelled power Duff unfolded to the Assembly India's condition and needs, his own work and its results, the developments waiting in the future, and then in a passionate climax, in which the great soul of the man leaped forth and touched every soul that heard, he pressed upon the Church its duty of helping with all its might, this great work of Christ. Even to *read* that speech to-day, after the lapse of eighty years and with no living voice behind the impassioned words, makes one thrill with sympathy with the noble speaker and his glorious theme. One extract can alone be given here, chosen not for its eloquence, but for its convincing defence of Duff's educational methods,—which were said by some critics to be too secular :—

“Do then let me again crave the attention of this venerable court to the grand *peculiarity*, *that if in India you only impart ordinary useful knowledge, you thereby demolish what by its people is regarded as sacred.* A course of instruction that professes to convey *truth of any kind* thus becomes a species of *religious education* in such a land—all education being there regarded as religious or theological. Every branch of sound

general knowledge which you inculcate becomes the destroyer of some corresponding part in the Hindu system. It is this that gives to the dissemination of mere human knowledge, in the present state of India, such awful importance: it is this that exalts and magnifies it into the rank of a *primary* instrument in spreading the seeds of reformation throughout the land. I ask not, whether sound useful knowledge be universally necessary, either as the precursor or friendly ally of that which is divine. Such is neither my own impression nor belief. But seeing that the communication of useful knowledge becomes, in the circumstances described, such a tremendous engine for breaking down the accumulated superstitions and idolatries of ages, I do ask, in opposition to those who decry and denounce useful knowledge, not in the abstract but as totally inapplicable to missionary purposes—I do ask, with humble but confident boldness, as in the sight of heaven, ‘Who is it that will henceforward have the hardihood to assert that the impartation of such knowledge has nothing to do with the Christianisation of India?’”

When Duff ended, and sank down exhausted in his seat, the emotion of the Assembly was almost unparalleled in its history. One after another of the leaders of the house, ministers and elders, moderates and evangelicals, rose and testified to the impression the young missionary had made upon them. Courteous indifference gave way to living sympathy, and with the unanimous approval of the Church, Duff entered on his missionary campaign throughout Scotland. For four years he toured through the Presbyteries, inspiring them in turn with something of his own enthusiasm and devotion, forming organisations for the support of Missions, and ever and again at the larger centres delivering one of his matchless orations. And what was the result? This,—by 1838

he had made the Scottish Church a "Missionary" Church; he had inspired in the hearts of the Scottish people the missionary interest which has never since departed from them; he had raised the annual missionary contributions of the Church from £1200 to over £7000; and, best of all, he had kindled in the souls of not a few of the best of the Church's young ministers a missionary flame that burned with the brightness of his own, and that impelled them to give themselves to India. Macdonald and Smith of Calcutta, Anderson, Johnstone, and Braidwood of Madras, and Murray Mitchell of Bombay—all these noted missionaries were the fruit of Duff's work in Scotland, in those memorable years.

#### IV.

The spring of 1840 found him once more in India. Going out by the newly opened Red Sea route and visiting Egypt and Sinai on the way, he reached Bombay in February. Then journeying round India in a coasting vessel, he touched for five days at Madras, where his heart was gladdened by a sight of the work Anderson was doing, on the lines already laid down at Calcutta. John Anderson combined the qualities of an earnest evangelist with those of an able teacher, and Duff bore hearty testimony to his work:—

"Nowhere," he wrote, "have I met with young men of the same age and standing who evinced a more intelligent grasp, a more feeling comprehension of the divine truths which they



had learned from God's holy oracles. In some cases there is every reason to believe that vital and saving impressions have begun to be made. And even should all be renounced in a day, what has been done will not, cannot be, lost. Talk and dream who will of not being able, directly and formally, and in the home sense, to preach the Gospel in our Indian Mission Seminaries, I do most solemnly aver for myself that never, never, when addressing an audience of fellow-Christians in my native land, had I a more sensible consciousness of reaching the understanding and the heart, than I had when pouring out my soul on the theme of man's lost and ruined state by sin, and of man's redemption through a crucified but Divine Redeemer, in presence of the assembled youth of the General Assembly's Institution, Madras."

Calcutta was reached in the end of March and they began Duff's second and longest period of Indian work. It was a changed Calcutta to which he returned, and Duff was deeply struck with the extent of the change. The English Renaissance, of which he had himself been the chief originator, had now been in full flow for several years, and on all sides he was faced with evidences of the extent to which English ideas and institutions were being assimilated and adopted by young India. But the sight which gave him the greatest joy was the newly erected General Assembly's Institution, in Cornwallis Square, with its 700 pupils, its staff of teachers, and at the head four ardent European colleagues. With a glad heart Duff thanked God for what had been wrought, and with characteristic ardour flung himself into a fresh campaign.

The staff of five missionaries made possible many

great developments, of which the chief can here be merely named. A distribution of the work of teaching enabled each to specialise, and of this the students derived the benefit. Physical and Natural Science, Literature, Mathematics, and Philosophy were taught to a standard abreast of that of the Scottish Universities of the day. A department was instituted for the Training of Teachers, which for years supplied many of the best of the staffs of Government schools and schools of other Missions. A Sabbath Bible Class was opened for Bengali clerks, and once a week Duff lectured to adult Hindus on the masterpieces of English Literature. A Girls' School was established, and seed sown which developed later into the regular Zenana Teaching and Female Schools of modern days. But underlying and penetrating all these activities was the one master-motive of winning the allegiance of young India to Jesus Christ.

For a time after Duff's return no converts came forward to cheer him, but he and his colleagues worked on and waited. "God is a Sovereign Lord," was his comment later on this period, "and at that time so far as I could judge, the grace of God's spirit operated effectually only on one soul, to whom it brought home with power the whole truth of Gospel salvation, through Jesus Christ."

But, as has often happened, the one was followed by more, and soon it came to pass that every now and then the Hindu community was startled and

the Christian workers were encouraged by the baptism of some Brahman youth. Says Dr. Smith of this period :—

“Whether we look at the spiritual or the intellectual character of the young men: whether we consider what they sacrificed for Christ; or what He enabled them to become by His work, we may assert that no Christian Mission can show such a roll of converts from the subtlest system of a mighty faith and an ancient civilisation, as Dr. Duff’s college, in the first thirteen years of its history.”

Those thirteen years marked a grave crisis in the history not only of Duff but also in that of the Scottish Church: for they bring us to the year 1843,—the year of the great tragedy in Scottish Church life, when forth from the National Church there went one-third of her ministers, elders, and people, including amongst them many of the noblest and most spiritual of her sons. Not all the noblest nor all the more spiritual, for the Church that owned and honoured a Norman Macleod and a Robertson of Ellon, not to mention others like them, can never be justly termed unspiritual. But it is undoubtedly true that the Free Church numbered among her ministers a large majority of those who had been most keenly interested in the missionary enterprise, and among her people an equally large majority of those who had contributed most liberally to the missionary cause.

Out to India went the tidings of the great Disruption, and with a unanimity which the Church of

Scotland deplored, and over which the Free Church as naturally rejoiced, the missionaries notified their adhesion to the Free Church, and severed their connection with the Church of Scotland. To that Church it was a staggering blow, for it rendered necessary the rebuilding of her Indian Missions from the very foundation, and that at a time when she was reeling under the shock of the loss of so many of her sons at home. But in due time the rebuilding work was done, though it was long before it attained the development it had reached prior to '43. But here we must confine our attention to the manner in which the crisis affected Duff and his colleagues.

Their decision was a conscientious act on their part, which called for a faith in the future even stronger than that which was required by their Free Church brethren in Scotland. The home financial strain was bound to be very great. Was it at all likely that for some time at least, the additional strain of supporting a Foreign Mission staff could be met? But in faith that it would be met, and sacrificing part of their own salaries to make the home task somewhat lighter, Duff and the other missionaries took the step they felt to be right. The General Assembly's Institution, being the property of the Church of Scotland, had to be surrendered, and for a short time the missionaries had difficulty in securing a local habitation. But only for a very short time, for the signal self-sacrifice

they had shown touched the heart of European Calcutta to a marvellous degree. The larger half of the Scottish congregation of St. Andrew's Church, influenced greatly by the eloquence of Duff who delivered a stirring course of lectures on the question of the hour, joined the Free Church, and formed a congregation of their own ministered to by one of the missionaries. By the wealthier members of this congregation financial help to the mission was freely given, and not by them alone, for wealthy laymen of other denominations also had their imaginations touched, and their contributions flowed in. In the first year, by friends in India and in Scotland, no less than £3400 was subscribed, so the strain of poverty was not seriously felt. A building was rented to which in March, 1844, the whole of the thousand students migrated, and the work went on as before. Two years later the Church of Scotland, though sadly crippled through want of men, was able to send to Calcutta one who worthily represented her, in Dr. Ogilvie. Dr. Ogilvie was a gentle, scholarly and earnest missionary, under whom the old Institution soon filled with 700 students; and it is pleasing to read that, at a time when the two Churches at home were often hardly on speaking terms with each other, in Calcutta the relations between the missionaries were quite fraternal, most friendly intercourse being maintained between Dr. Duff and Dr. Ogilvie, until the latter's death in 1871. Thus for Calcutta as also for Madras

and Bombay, the ultimate result of the great schism<sup>6</sup> was good, for in time it practically doubled the Scottish missionary agencies at work.

To the development of the Free Church Institution Duff gave himself heart and soul, and Brahman converts to Christianity continued to be gained. No Presbyterian native congregation, however, yet existed, so for Christian fellowship, and especially for Christian work, these converts were passed on to other missions that had been longer in the field, and in this way Duff's College came to supply the place of a Training Institute, whence educated native Christian workers went forth to enrich all the Churches. But in time a Presbyterian Native Church came into being, which naturally absorbed its share, and in the growth of this Church Duff took a lively interest. His chief interest, however, lay in the wider field of educated Hindu life, and every agency that tended to develop that life on lines of righteousness found in him an active and willing helper. By contributing articles to the *Calcutta Review*—which magazine he helped to found,—by delivering lectures of an educative and uplifting type, and by sympathetic support of such Government measures as tended to the amelioration of the lot of the people and their emancipation from error, he strove to advance the highest welfare of India. In this busy life ten years slipped away, when again, in 1847, Duff was summoned to Scotland.

## V.

The cause of the summons was the death of the great Free Church leader, Dr. Chalmers. To his wide public duties, Chalmers had added those of professor and principal of the New College, in Edinburgh, and to the bereaved Church it seemed that for this important office, in which capacity for teaching and inspiring the young ministers of the Church was so essential, Chalmers' great pupil, Duff of Calcutta, was pre-eminently marked out as his successor. So the invitation went out, to be met with a grateful but decided refusal. Duff was doing a great work in India, and could not come down to do a much smaller work in Edinburgh. But when there went a second call to come home for a time, and work for the Missions, the response was different, and in 1850 Duff found himself in Scotland once again.

There the old work awaited him, first to inspire the Church with new zeal, and then organise that zeal for practical results,—and it was done with the old success. Again was the Assembly—the Free Church Assembly now, be it remembered—thrilled by his eloquence and moved to action by his appeal, and the hold he gained on the Church may be gathered from the fact that for the next Assembly he was chosen as Moderator. Who indeed could fail to be moved by such a glowing appeal for Christian loyalty as this, spoken by a Highlander to brother-Scots?—

“In days of yore I was wont to listen to the Poems of Ossian, and to many of those melodies that were called Jacobite Songs. . . . While listening to these airs of the olden times, some stanzas and sentiments made an indelible impression on my mind. Roving in the days of my youth over the heathery heights, or climbing the craggy steepes of my native land, or lying down to enjoy the roaring waterfalls, I was wont to admire the heroic spirit which they breathed: and they became so stamped on my memory that I have carried them with me over more than half the world. One of these seemed to me to embody the quintessence of loyalty of an earthly kind. It is the stanza in which it is said by the father or mother:—

‘I hae but ae son, the gallant young Donald’:  
and then the gush of emotion turned his heart as it were inside out, and he exclaimed:—

‘But, oh, had I ten, they would follow Prince Charlie’.  
Are these the visions of romance—the dreams of poetry and of song? Oh, let that rush of youthful warriors from bracken bush and glen, that rallied round the standards of Glenfinnan,—let the gory beds and the cold grassy winding sheet of bleak Culloden Muir bear testimony to the reality, the intensity of the loyalty to an earthly prince: and shall a Highland father and mother give up all their children as a homage to earthly loyalty, and shall I be told that in the Churches of Christ, in the Free Church of Scotland, fathers and mothers will begrudge their children to Him, who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords?”

Little wonder that so impassioned an appeal, in which Scottish sentiment was skilfully turned to the highest uses, carried everything before it. Duff was commissioned to rouse and organise the Church, so as to make her a worthy home base for the great work in the foreign field. It took three years of work. Every part of the country was visited and roused, old organisations were strengthened and



new were created, and at last he could report that in every single congregation of the Church a missionary association had been formed, whose work it was to pray for the Foreign Missions of the Church, to diffuse information regarding their work, and to arrange for a collection every quarter for their support. It was a triumph not unworthy of being placed beside his Indian successes ; and greatly serviceable to the missionary cause.

But there was still other work to be done for India, while he was at home. In 1853 the Charter of the East India Company was to come up for revisal and renewal by the British Parliament, and in the preceding year, the whole subject was carefully gone into by a special Committee of the House of Lords. Among the numerous witnesses examined no one was weightier and more valued than the famous missionary, and for India's sake he strove to secure many desirable changes. Educational developments on the part of Government, a fair distribution of educational grants, and the opening of the Civil Service to the youth of Britain, were the main points to which Duff gave attention, and his influence was apparent in the form in which each point finally appeared in the Charter. Greatest of all the advances made was that embodied in the famous Educational Despatch of Sir Charles Wood in 1854, which forms the basis on which rests the whole of the present-day educational system of the Govern-



“If in that land you do give the people knowledge without religion, rest assured that it is the greatest blunder, politically speaking, that ever was committed. Having free unrestricted access to the whole range of our English literature and science, they will despise and reject their own absurd systems of learning. Once driven out of their own systems, they will inevitably become infidels in religion. And shaken out of their own religious observances, without moral principle to balance their thoughts or guide their movements, they will as certainly become discontented, restless agitators,—ambitious of power and official distinction, and possessed of the most disloyal sentiments towards that Government which, in their eye, has usurped all the authority that rightfully belonged to themselves. This is not theory, it is a statement of fact. I myself can testify in this place, as I have already done on the spot, that expressions and opinions of a most rebellious nature have been known to drop from some of the very protégés of that Government which, for its own sake, is so infatuated as to insist on giving knowledge apart from religion.”

This was Duff's conviction to the very end, and is now universally shared. The same unanimity does not obtain with regard to the practical proposal of introducing Bible teaching in Government schools. Apart from the impossibility of ensuring that the teachers in such schools would always be men really qualified to impart Christian instruction, there are grave considerations which in a land such as India seem to make the proposal—even were it admitted to be justifiable—both impracticable and inadvisable. Suffice it here to say that the proposal was ruled out; and that through a large extension of mission institutions, made possible by grants-in-aid, the effect of the non-religious education in the

schools of the Government was sought to be neutralised.

In the course of his cross-examination by the House of Lords Committee, Dr. Duff found it necessary and desirable to give clear statements on various points of missionary policy and expectations, which are still of value. Questioned by the Duke of Argyll as to the conversions resulting in his mission, Duff replied :—

“Numerically considered the converts from these higher educational missionary processes make no great figure: they ought however to be estimated not by their quantity but by their quality. Young persons come at a very early age in a stage of heathenism, and go through a long preparatory course of training. In the progress of their Christian studies the consciences of some are pricked with convictions of sin: they find in the Gospel the true salvation, and they openly embrace the Christian faith. It is but a small proportion of them however that do so: but then from their cultured and well-stored minds, they are of a higher order of converts. Some of them become teachers and some preachers of the Gospel: and to train and qualify such is one of the great ulterior ends of the institution I was privileged to found, as well as of other similar institutions in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and elsewhere.”

And again, when asked by the Bishop of Oxford as to the prospects of a Christian India, he gave the following striking forecast :—

“Many persons mistake the way in which the conversion of India will be brought about. I believe it will take place at last wholesale, just as our own ancestors were converted. The country will have Christian instruction infused into it in every way, by direct missionary education, and indirectly through

books of various kinds, through the public papers, through conversation with Europeans, and in all the conceivable ways in which knowledge is imparted. Then, at last, when society is completely saturated with Christian knowledge, and public opinion has taken a decided turn that way, they will come over by thousands."

But the India which he loved so much and served so well, was ever calling him, and in October, 1854, after a brief visit to America, he sailed once more for the East.

## VI.

Duff's third and final term of Indian service extended over eight years, and though some of these were very stormy years—for they witnessed the Mutiny—yet for the mission they were years of numerical growth and of steady development in power and usefulness. The Mutiny and its suppression, as well as its lessons for the future, aroused the deepest interest in Duff. He would not have been a Highlander had he not felt a glow of pride in the splendid heroism of the Highland regiments, and the accounts which he regularly transmitted home of the progress of events were eagerly waited for by all Scotland. In Calcutta, when all was excitement and apprehension, he acted as a steadying influence. "Though the Mission House," he wrote, "is absolutely unprotected, in the very heart of the city, far away from the European quarters, I never dreamt of leaving it. . . .

Our Mission work in all its branches, alike in Calcutta and the country stations, continues to go on without any interruption." And when the day of triumph came, his was one of the leading voices to plead for moderation, and the taking of a *Christian* revenge.

"Amid our personal sorrows and horror at the barbarities of the misguided sepoys and their allies we as Christians have much need to watch our own spirits, lest the longing for retribution swallow up the feelings of mercy. Already we begin to perceive here a recoil and reaction against the natives generally. But, as Christians, ought we not to lay it to heart, that the men who have been guilty of such outrages against humanity have been so, just because they never came under the regenerating, softening, mellowing influences of the Gospel of grace and salvation? And their diabolical conduct, instead of being an argument against further labour and liberality in attempting to evangelise this land, ought to furnish one of the most powerful arguments in favour of enhanced labour and liberality."

Especially did he rejoice over the steadfastness of the Native Christians in the hour of trial. With rare exceptions they proved true unto death, with a fidelity equalling that of the martyrs of old.

But the Mutiny passed, and with it there passed also the rule of the East India Company, which was succeeded by the rule of the British Crown. It was a transition that brought to the front many new questions of public interest, and in deciding on these Duff's experience and abilities were placed freely at the Government's service. Notably was this the case in framing the constitution of the new

Universities, and in securing fair administration of the educational funds. The Vice-Chancellor's office in Calcutta University was to have been his, —and surely no man ever held that post with equal right, for had not Duff made possible the very existence of the University?—but ere he could accept the offer his Indian days abruptly ended. In 1863 there came a return of the old malady that had laid him low thirty years previously, and the doctors' verdict was "*Home—and for good*".

Never probably has a missionary left India amid such a wealth of public honours, as those which now were showered on the veteran's head by all classes and races. India from North to South acknowledged her benefactor. University Scholarships were founded bearing his honoured name, portraits of him were painted, a marble bust showing his lineaments was placed in the hall of his college: and, as a personal offering, the Scottish merchants of India, Singapore, and China presented him with £13,000. Of this princely gift Duff would consent to accept only the interest, and on this he lived for the remainder of his days, the capital being invested as an endowment for invalided missionaries. Addresses there were without end, and the tributes paid by the foremost men of Calcutta, such as Sir Henry Maine and Bishop Cotton, told how great and universal was the esteem in which Duff was held in India. The depth of the regard in which India was held by Duff found its best expression in one of his

parting speeches, spoken to educated non-Christians. It may stand as Duff's farewell to India :—

“Whether under the ordination of the High and Holy One, who inhabiteth eternity, my days be few or many : whether my old age be one of decrepitude or of privileged usefulness, my best and latest thoughts will be still of India. Wherever I wander, wherever I roam : wherever I labour, wherever I rest, my heart will be still in India. So long as I am in this tabernacle of clay I shall never cease, if permitted by a gracious Providence, to labour for the good of India : my latest breath will be spent in imploring blessings on India and its people. And when at last this frail body is consigned to the silent tomb, while I myself think that the only befitting epitaph for my tombstone would be—‘Here lies Alexander Duff, by nature and practice a sinful guilty creature, but saved by grace, through faith in the blood and righteousness of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ’ :—were it, by others thought desirable that any addition should be made to this sentence, I would reckon it my highest earthly honour, should I be deemed worthy of appropriating the grandly generous words, already suggested by the exuberant kindness of one of my oldest native friends, in some such form as follows : ‘By profession a missionary : by his life and labours, the true and constant friend of India’.”

For India Duff's life ends here : but for Scotland it lasted through other fourteen fruitful years. The rôle of Apostle of Missions, already twice assumed on his former visits home, was now again taken up and maintained while life lasted. To educate his countrymen in missionary knowledge, and to inspire and maintain their enthusiasm for the missionary cause, was henceforth the one ruling passion of his life. As Professor of Evangelistic Theology (a chair in the New College, Edinburgh, especially founded



for him by Sir William Mackinnon), he was brought into touch with all the young ministers of his Church, the effect of which was seen in the number of distinguished missionaries whom that Church sent forth into the world: while as Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee he came into close relationship with the membership of his Church throughout Scotland, and of that the result was witnessed in a steady increase in the Church's missionary offerings.

These congenial duties, by which he still helped India though far from her shores, made the long evening of his life a very active one. Yet he found time too for pleasing and profitable relaxation. As each summer came round he carried out a tour in some part of the Continent of Europe, thus late in life making up for the forced abstinence from this great delight of modern life, which long residence in India inevitably imposes. Restored in vigour by his tours, he returned to each winter's work with ever fresh energy and remained to the end of his days a great spiritual force for Scotland. Yes, for Scotland—and not merely for his own Church. India had done for him what it does for all sensible men, who there open their eyes and see things as they are. It had made it impossible for him to be sectarian in his Christianity. And when he returned to Scotland to find the sectarian spirit sadly dominant in the Churches, he would none of it. By word and by life he testified against it, urging the duty of

Union, as a means for strengthening the Church of Christ in Scotland, both for her work at Home and her work in the Foreign Field.

“What is the design of the present negotiations,” he asked in 1870 when the question was seriously mooted. “Is it not to bring into closer corporate alliance the three largest of the non-established Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, between whom there seem to exist no real differences on grand vital essential doctrinal points, and by so doing to repair at least some of the widest breaches in our once happily united Scottish Zion : and that, too, not as an end in itself, however blessed, but as a means to a more glorious end—even that of the more effective evangelisation of the sunken masses at home, and of the hundreds of millions of heathen abroad? . . . But the work of reconstruction and reconsolidation will not be completed until, in some practicable way by which any ‘wood, hay or stubble’ in our respective edifices, or any ‘untempered mortar’ in these walls being wisely disposed of, the present established and non-established Churches may be all re-united on a common platform, in one Reformed National Church,—national at least in the sense of embracing within its fold the great bulk of our Scottish population.”

As he spoke so he lived. An apostle of Union no less than an apostle of Missions, he gained and held the love and the admiration of every branch of the Scottish Church, and when on the 12th day of February, 1878, the grand old man passed to his reward, the whole of Scotland mourned his departure. In him his country lost one of her greatest sons, and the Scottish Church one of the noblest of her immortals. Round his grave in the Grange Cemetery at Edinburgh, the leaders of the contending Churches met. Brothers in their grief and in their veneration

for the dead they forgot their divisions, and revealed the persistence of that inner unity of religion and of race, for whose visible manifestation the man they mourned had lived and worked, and prayed. When the day comes for the final closing of the breach in Scottish Christianity which was made in '43, it will not be forgotten that one of the forces that helped to close it was Alexander Duff.

## VII.

The passage of eighty years, since Duff's great experiment in missionary method began, makes it possible to appraise with some accuracy the real value of his services to Indian Christianity and to the Indian people. That the method he introduced has been subsequently adopted by practically every Mission in India as an important section of its operations, and that to-day the leading Missions are combining their forces in order to make their educational work in its higher developments yet more efficient,—these are facts eloquent of the judgment of the years. It is a judgment of emphatic approval of the daring departure which was made in 1830 by the young Scottish missionary.

Yet there is probably no other branch of missionary operations which has been so frequently criticised by loyal friends of Missions as has this which owed its origin to Alexander Duff, and lingering doubts still find recurring expression as to the real wisdom

and foresight which were shown by the famous pioneer, when he launched on India his revolutionary missionary method. But the doubts are not well founded. Usually they originate from exclusive consideration of two admitted facts,—the small number of direct accessions to the Christian Church which missionary colleges to-day record, and the large reinforcements which these colleges send to the Higher Hinduism of the present time. Both facts are true, but they do not impugn the soundness of the methods of Duff. What they indicate is the extent to which the emergence of new conditions, since Duff's time, has in certain directions limited such successes as were achieved in the early days. The regularising of University education in India, and the great extension of Government schools and colleges throughout the country, accompanied as this has been by the acceptance of Government grants-in-aid by Mission schools and colleges, are developments which to a considerable extent have limited the control by missionaries over their own institutions. These institutions are now part of the educational system of India, and the high standards of education laid down by the Government and the Universities of India for all schools and colleges have to be maintained by the institutions under Mission control. With a limited staff of missionary teachers—limited because of restricted finances—it is seldom found possible to do this, and yet give the same large place to direct religious

teaching as was easily secured in the days when the missionary had full control of the college timetable. Lal Behari Day, one of Duff's converts and assistants, who has left an interesting volume, *Recollections of Alexander Duff*, emphasises this change with knowledge, if also with some exaggeration :—

“As missionaries prepare their students for the degrees of the University, they adopt the curriculum of studies prescribed by that learned body: they have therefore at the present less time for the Christian and theological training of their pupils than before: while the students themselves naturally pay little or no attention to those studies which do not *pay* in the University examination. The state of things was different however in the pre-university days of which I am speaking. The students were in those days thoroughly grounded in a course of Natural Theology, a course of Evidences of Christianity, a course of Systematic Theology, a short course of Ecclesiastical History, besides a course of lectures on almost the whole of Holy Scriptures, from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation.”<sup>1</sup>

To some extent this is the voice of a *laudator temporis acti*, yet the reminder he gives of the large place devoted to religious instruction, in the early days of Duff's activity, is valuable as a help to a fair judgment on the results achieved under the very different conditions of to-day. So pronounced a place for religious instruction is simply impossible under the modern system; and it is therefore not surprising that those visible successes which were the glory of the “thirties” of last century are not

<sup>1</sup> Lal Behari Day, *Recoll. of Alex. Duff*, p. 138.

repeated to-day in the same impressive manner. Had Duff been living now, we may be sure that, recognising the limitations which new circumstances have imposed, he would, without any surrender of the educational method, have so developed it as to secure by fresh avenues the personal touch and the direct appeal which are needed to win the allegiance of souls to Christ. And this is precisely what educational missionaries in India are setting themselves to do.

Still less is the wisdom of Duff impugned by the other present-day fact which leads some to question it,—the accessions to Higher Hinduism received from the missionary colleges. In Duff's earlier years, there was no Higher Hinduism as we know it, to-day. A great gulf yawned between Hinduism and Christianity. The only haven for earnest young Hindus who felt in their souls a longing for a higher and a purer life was the Christian Church; and that, at a fearful sacrifice, was sought and gained by not a few. But now to Hindu eyes the gulf between the two faiths has become less apparent, through the emergence of a higher life and thought in Hinduism itself,—due largely to the spiritual movement which Duff initiated; and in the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj, or other like Associations, many find a base on which they are satisfied to rest. Before Duff died he fully realised this direction in which Hindu student-life was flowing, and he was not dismayed. The upward trend of the movement was

cordially welcomed as marking a distinct spiritual advance, and he looked forward confidently to the time when the development should culminate in the open acknowledgment by Young India of Christ as Lord. In this attitude and in this expectation he is followed by the great mass of competent opinion to-day.

When one passes from these negative criticisms of educational missions,—which taken at their best amount to a declaration that Duff's educational methods, after eighty years' trial, need to be readjusted to meet the changing needs, and to overcome the changing difficulties, of the passing decades,—and considers the positive service which educational missions have rendered to India, the difficulty is to express adequately the wide-reaching influence they have exerted and the results which they have achieved. One carefully weighed testimony may be quoted,—that given by Bishop Gore at the World Missionary Conference in 1910, when presenting the Report of the very representative Commission on Christian Education. That Report is frankly critical on various details of Indian educational missions, and richly suggestive as to the best lines of future development, but at the same time is enthusiastic in its appreciation of the immense benefits they have conferred upon India and Indian Christianity. Said Bishop Gore in his opening tribute :—

“If you look to the diffusion which has taken place of Christian ideas and ideals, far beyond the region of any specific Church membership or Christian belief, and if you ask who are in the main responsible for this, I answer unhesitatingly, in the main *Christian Educators*. Again if you ask what has most powerfully impressed even the hostile imagination within the charmed circle of Indian Society, I say the elevation of the out-castes; and if you ask what is it that has been the instrument of that elevation, I say once again *Christian Education*. If you ask once more, who has sustained the ideal of Education as a training of character and a training of the whole personality, through a day when the individualist movement was largely reducing the idea of education to the idea of imparting information to be simply received and retained by the memory and comprehended by the intellect, I answer once again the *Christian Educator*. If finally you go to any Statesman, any one occupied with the problems in the East, and find him overwhelmed by the vast gulf which exists between East and West, and the inability to bridge it, and find him depressed with the failure of education, and ask where you have to look for that bond of sympathy, I venture to say that he is almost sure to point to the Missionaries, and to say that if there have been men occupied in creating, and, at least in large part, successful in creating a bond of spiritual sympathy between East and West, between the European and the Oriental, they have been once more the *Christian Educators*. From all these points of view I cannot introduce this Commission without bearing witness to the profound impression which has been made in our minds as a Commission, of the incomparable value of the labours of *Christian Educators*.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Duff and his successors need no more convincing testimony than this. Two years later it was endorsed by the National Conference of Indian Missionaries held at Calcutta in December, 1912, under the Presidency of Dr. John Mott:—

<sup>1</sup> *Reports of World Miss. Conf.*, vol. iii., p. 405.



"It is the deliberate conviction of this Conference," they resolved, "that the need for Missionary Schools and Colleges as a Christian Agency was never greater than now." And further: "There has been a notable advance in the standards of higher education, and a consequent increase in the cost of such education. This imperatively demands that authorities both at home and on the field should bend every energy to maintain higher standards both of Educational and Religious efficiency in these Missionary Institutions."

Whatever modifications in detail the experience of eighty years suggests on the missionary method of Duff, clearly they do not affect the singular excellence of that method as a powerful agency in gripping the heart and intellect of India. "The largest fact in recent Indian history," says J. N. Farquhar very truly, "is the intellectual and moral upheaval which has produced the modern educated Hindu." And, we may add, the man who brought that fact into being was Alexander Duff. There is scarcely a development which touches the higher spiritual and intellectual side of Modern India which does not owe intensely to him. To Duff is due the wider scope of Christian Missions of to-day, which count truth in every sphere an ally to be welcomed. To him is due the deeper aim of Missions of to-day, when they seek to win the mind as well as the heart of India for Christ. To him every Government school and college, aye and every Hindu institution as well, where the English tongue is the means of imparting Western knowledge, is largely indebted for very existence: for in him was found the bold

pioneer whose daring experiment first showed the way to progress, and then by its success compelled all others to follow. And when one thinks how much of the advance, which marks the India of the present, is due to this free appropriation of the intellectual and spiritual treasures of the West, it is only bare truth to say that in Alexander Duff we have the man who, of all men, is best entitled to be termed a *Maker of Modern India*. Yet his own self-chosen epitaph, if much humbler, is also much nobler : “Alexander Duff, by profession a Missionary, by his life and labours, the true and constant Friend of India”.

With Duff the long line of pioneer Apostles of India culminates and closes. The Missionary Apostolate indeed goes on, with largely augmented forces, and characterised by rapidly growing effectiveness, and an endless variety of methods carefully planned to suit the varying times and places where

the workers are engaged. But it is a new era in Indian Missions, and its record tells of the march of a great apostolic army rather than of the achievements of individual champions of the faith. Before Carey arrived in India the average number of Protestant missionaries at work in the country at any one time had never exceeded ten; by the time Duff left India the number had grown to about 550; to-day the foreign missionaries, ordained and unordained, men and women, who are witnessing and working for Christ in India number 4614.<sup>1</sup> The little one has become a thousand, the small one a strong city.

In this great army there have been, and there are to-day, men and women not a few who in earnest devotedness of life and ability of service are worthy to rank with Xavier, with De Britto, with Ziegenbalg, or with Duff; but their individual mark and personal renown are necessarily on quite another level. It is in Missions as in all other lines of human progress and achievement,—the heroes who did the pioneering work occupy a place in the mind of succeeding generations to which no later worker can possibly attain. Therefore it is that the line of those who have a primary claim to rank as the *Apostles of India*, which begins with St. Thomas, closes with Alexander Duff. If any names are

<sup>1</sup> Figures recorded by the World Missionary Conference, 1910. The number of Roman Catholic Missionaries in India—Priests, Lay Brothers and Sisters—is about 4000.

subsequently to be added to the noble roll, they will be the names not of foreigners but of gifted and devoted sons of India, who with apostolic power and compelling earnestness will rally their fellow-countrymen in tens of thousands to the standard of the Cross. For such Apostles India waits believingly; the names of such will gladly be added, by the approving voice of Christendom, to the apostolic roll.

It is indeed a noble roll, a "glorious company" of Apostles! In the preceding pages the work and services of each have been recorded, and the attempt made to estimate their distinctive values to the common cause they served; but on surveying the whole long line from St. Thomas to Duff, from the first century to the nineteenth, it is the unity of spirit rather than the diversity of operation that most impresses one. The diversities are great and inevitable: with Apostles drawn from centuries far apart, from nationalities alien in sympathies and ideals, and from Churches differing in their ways, and even in their beliefs, it could not be otherwise. Gathered on one platform to-day the Apostles would not easily commingle,—Pantaenus and Xavier, de Nobili and Schwartz, de Britto and Carey, St. Thomas and Alexander Duff,—but seen from the quite separate view-point of modern times their deeper unity outshines all else. They were all one in Christ Jesus, one in their reverence for him as Lord, and one in their heart's desire to do their

Lord's will. Mistaken as to that will in some points doubtless were they all, some grievously so, but the loyalty of the soul to Christ was there : for him they lived, and when need arose for him they died. So it is that to all the long line, save perhaps to one, we bow in reverent acknowledgment, recognising in them men who sought to be true to the Heavenly King, and gladly sacrificed all for the highest that they knew. The exception is Menezes, for he served the Church rather than the Church's Lord, yet he too was faithful to *his* highest ; and his influence in giving outward shape to Christianity in India has been so lasting, that he may not be omitted from the roll. One remembers that a far greater roll of Apostles contained one name much less worthy. But with this exception the line of India's Apostles is one which, making due allowance for the defective knowledge and human imperfections which mark even the most saintly, challenges and retains the admiration and the reverence of the Christian world.

The tardiness of victory in a campaign led by such champions will always be, at first sight, a cause of perplexed wonder, yet when the methods they adopted are considered and the conditions under which the fight was waged are realised, there is little ground for surprise. It is the simple truth to say that *constructive* missionary work in India, of a durable nature, is little more than a hundred years old. Splendid ventures of faith there were throughout

the earlier centuries, marked as in the case of Francis Xavier by a heroism and devotion that will never be surpassed, but there was no appreciation of the conditions under which these ventures, if they were to win lasting success, had to be carried out. In India of all lands, such appreciation is an imperative necessity for Christian progress, yet for long centuries the champions of Christianity who journeyed to India lacked this absolutely. Their fighting was magnificent but it was not effective war. First to realise the compelling nature of the Indian environment was de Nobili, but he failed to meet the needs on righteous lines. Ziegenbalg had equally clear discernment and wiser strategy, but on his work and that of Schwartz there fell the fatal blight of Caste, and the rich promise which marked their operations for a time was not fulfilled. Only with the arrival of Carey and Duff did there come to Christian missionaries, along with the knowledge of India's needs, the clear discernment of the lines by which these needs might be so supplied as to lay the foundations of a living and abiding Christianity in the heart and mind of the Indian people. In the providence of God the extension of British Rule in India coincided with this new stage in the evolution of Christian Missions, and thereby was secured for Christian effort the "fair field and no favour," which is all that missionaries desire.

It is by the progress which has been made under these conditions that the success, actual and potential,

of Christian Missions in India is to be estimated—and only so. When this is done, the verdict is never doubtful. The record of the hundred years is one of advance along every line where Christian missionaries have worked and witnessed, and along many other lines where the leaven has wrought in secret and in silence but with pervading power. Numbers alone give only a very partial indication of the Christian advance, yet they are impressive; and the existence in India to-day of a Christian community of 3,876,203 souls,<sup>1</sup> is a fact that speaks for itself. It represents an increase of over 100 per cent. within the last thirty years, during which period the whole population of India has increased about 25 per cent. But more significant than any numerical advances is the growth of the Christian spirit, ideals and life among the Indian people. “You may not think that India is being converted to Christianity,” said not long ago a leading Bombay Judge, Sir Narayan Chandavarka, “but it is certain that the whole of Hindu thought and life is being permeated by the principles of Christianity.” How true this is, they best know who know India best. The Apostles of India have not lived in vain. Many of the things they desired to see, but did not see,

<sup>1</sup> Roman Catholic Church (including Romo-Syrians), 1,904,006; Reformed Churches, 1,657,035; Syrian Church, 315,162. (Census figures of 1911.) Within the decade 1901-1911, Roman Catholic Christians increased by 25 per cent, Non-Roman Christians by 45 per cent.

are being beheld by their successors to-day. The supreme end for which they worked and agonised and prayed,—often in thick darkness and in much bewilderment of soul, yet never doubting that come it would—that end, the glad acknowledgment of Christ by India, is not yet full come, but the day is hastening on. In that day should the *Apostles of India*, now at rest with Him whom they delighted to serve, be permitted a vision of the scenes of their earthly pilgrimage, they shall see of the travail of their soul and shall be satisfied.



# APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX I.

ONE of the most pleasing forms in which the Thomas tradition has been enshrined is the following Vesper Hymn, taken from the *Mozarabic Breviary*, edited by Cardinal Lorenzana in 1775.

*In Festo Sancti Thomae Apostoli—ad Vesperum.*

### HYMNUS.

Festum, Christe Rex, per orbem,  
Inluxit almificum,  
In quo tibi confitetur  
Cuncta cohors fidelium  
Gloriam, persolvunt hymnum  
Pro triumphis Martyrum.

Gloriosus, ecce, tuusque  
Thomas Discipulus,  
Cicatrices contractando,  
Creditus est Dominus ;  
Inter fratres gloriosus  
Exstitit Apostolus.

Nuncius venit de Indis  
Quaerere artificem :  
Architectum construere  
Regium palatium :  
In foro deambulabat  
Cunctorum venalium.

Habeo servum fidelem,  
Locutus est Dominus,  
Ut exquiris talem, aptum  
Esse hunc artificem :  
Abbanes videns, et gaudens,  
Suscepit Apostolum.

Traditur Regis Ministris  
Sanctus Dei Apostolus :  
Eliophorum ingressus,  
Suscepit convivis ;  
Digna sui percussoris  
Reddita est ultio.

Rex ut vidit, et audivit  
Insigne miraculum  
Juvenes, ut benedicat,  
Supplicanter postulat :  
Sic Baptismo candidatos  
Consecrat velamine.

Gundaphorus Rex Indorum,  
Iniquus ac perfidus,  
Romanorum more, sibi  
Voluit palatium ;  
Hujus opus construere  
Praecipit Apostolo.

Sed beatus, atque sanctus  
Didymus Apostolus  
Erogando Regis aurum  
Construit palatium,  
Rutilum, coruscum gemmis,  
In supernis sedibus.

Carcere mox Rex Abbanem  
Trusit cum Apostolo  
Gath infirmus Regis frater  
Migrate ab hoc saeculo ;  
Caelo ductus vidit dignum,  
Fratrisque palatium.

Angeli expetunt Christo ;  
Ut resurgat mortuus ;  
Gundaphoro reddat aurum ;  
Emat oedificium,  
Et resolvat vinculatum  
Domini Discipulum.

Illico surgens, exponit  
Sacrum Regi ordinem,  
In carcerem deinde petit,  
Ejicit Apostolum,  
Obsecrant undique fratres  
Veniamque criminum.

Nunc Thomas in campum vocat  
Populos Indianicos ;  
Lapidem conscendit altum ;  
Corda mulcet gentium ;  
Per Baptisma pollicetur  
Veniam peccaminum.

Indiam superiorem  
Visitans adgreditur  
Dogma Christi praedicando,  
Fundavit Ecclaesiam,  
Infinita per Baptisma  
Consecravit millia.

Mira quippe, ac stupenda  
Faciens miracula  
Sinticaeque restauravit  
Corporalia lumina ;  
Laticis perfundit undam  
Illam et Mindoniam.

Christiana jam probata  
Regis uxor Treptia  
Regnum Christi concepiscens,  
Respuit terrestria ;  
Ulcerosus scaber  
Ut sanetur, postulat.

Precibus Thomae a Christo,  
Angelus dirigitur  
Exiit in parte totam  
Ulcerosam tunicam ;  
Novae cutis indumenta  
Vestivit corporeae.

Templum Solis comminutum  
Corruit cum idolo ;  
Ac metallum pretiosum,  
Solvitur in pulverem ;  
Rex illius civitatis,  
Fugit cum Carisio.

Tunc sacerdos idolorum  
Furibundis astitit,  
Gladio transverberavit  
Sanctum Christi martyrem  
Glorioso passionis  
Laureatum sanguine.

O beata inter omnes  
Edessena civitas,  
Quoe pignus suscepit alium,  
Domini Discipulum,  
Ubi corpus requiescit  
Cum honore conditum.

Inde cuncti te precamur  
Summi Patris filium  
Mitte nobis de supernis  
Invictum auxilium :  
Ut credentes evadamus  
Eternum supplicium.

Ut sub uno cuncta cohors  
Conjuncta fidelium  
Te sequamur, te canamus,  
Te fruamur perpetim :  
Humili confessione  
Proclamemus gloriam.

Gloria Patri, etc.

## APPENDIX II.

XAVIER'S own judgment as to the progress and prospects of Christianity in India may be gathered from the following remarkable letter, which he wrote to the King of Portugal from Cochin, on 20th January, 1548. Its amazing suggestions must have wrung the heart of the man who made them.

“To come to a matter which concerns myself individually, I have often pondered in my own mind, after carefully considering the question on every side, what I could write to your Majesty, as to the best means of spreading, and of firmly establishing, the Christian faith in this country. I am impelled to this course, on the one hand, from my desire to obey God and to promote his glory. I am deterred from doing it, on the other hand, because I despair of ever seeing my proposal carried into effect. Yet it has not appeared possible for me to be silent with a safe conscience, especially as it is evident to me that the thought has been put into my mind from above, for some special purpose : and I cannot devise any more probable reason for God having thus revealed the matter to me, than that I might make it known to your Majesty. And yet, again I tremble, lest, while I thus relieve my mind of its burden, my very letter may prove a testimony against your Majesty before God in your last hour, and aggravate your doom in the day of judgment, by depriving you of the plea of ignorance. I beseech your Majesty to believe that this fear greatly distresses me, since I am deeply conscious that I have no wish or intention, beyond finishing my labours and spending my life here in India,

in working for the salvation of souls. I trust that, by so doing, I may, to the best of my ability, relieve you of the weighty duties resting upon you, and, by discharging a part of your proper function, may lighten the burden of your Majesty's conscience, and enable you to await with greater safety the terrible decision of the last day. Your great love for our Society is such, that I ought to think this benefit cheaply purchased for you at the cost of any labour or troubles of my own. These conflicting anxieties, Sire, between my duty and your danger have, I confess, caused me extreme agitation and distress, but at last I have made up my mind, once and for all, to relieve my conscience of the burden which I have long concealed.

"Here, then, is the discovery which I have made during my long experience in India, Malacca, and the Moluccas, and which makes me sick at heart. Your Majesty must receive it as a certain truth, that much is neglected which God requires to be done in this country and elsewhere, through the hurtful and disgraceful rivalries which, under the mask of sanctity, prevail amongst your officers, arising out of trivial and concealed causes of offence. One declares—'It is my duty to do this, and I will suffer no one else to usurp the honour of it': another says—'If I am not the doer of it, I have no wish to see others do it': whilst a third complains—'I am bearing the burden and the heat of the day, whilst others receive all the profits and thanks'. With their passions heated by these altercations, they each strive, both by correspondence and manœuvres, to further their own interests. Thus, time is consumed, opportunities are lost, and no place is found for the things which relate to the cause of God. In the same way it often happens that the honour of your Majesty, and the interests of your empire in India, are neglected.

"I have discovered one only remedy for this evil the adoption of which, if I mistake not, would both increase the number of Christians in these parts, and protect those amongst them who now suffer injuries from the want of powerful patrons; so that no one, either of the Portuguese or Indians, would dare to molest or despoil them. That remedy is, that your Majesty should signify and clearly explain your intention, both by letter to the Viceroy and magistrates now in India, and verbally to

those whom you may hereafter send here, that you confide that which is your principal care—namely, the spreading of our holy faith, to the Viceroy and Governor of each province, more even than to all the ecclesiastics and priests who are in India; that you will call each of them strictly to account; and that you will impute to them every success or failure in this respect, and reward or punish them accordingly.

“In order that there may be no mistake about this declaration, I should wish you to mention each of us who are in these parts by name, declaring that you do not lay upon *us*, either individually or collectively, the duty which conscience demands of you; but that wherever there is any opportunity of spreading Christianity, it rests upon the Viceroy or Governor of the place, and upon him alone. That, since God has imposed upon your Majesty the weighty duty of watching over the salvation of the souls of your subjects, you can only demand the fulfilment of this duty from those to whom you have delegated your authority, and the honour of the magistracy, and who therefore represent the person of your Majesty in this country. And if you find that, owing to the negligence of any one of them, few have embraced the faith of Christ within the limits of his jurisdiction, you will devolve upon *him* the punishments which, otherwise, such neglect would call down upon your own head;—you have already given them full warning, that you have committed to your chief officers here the weighty charge of imbuing the souls of your heathen subjects with the faith of Christ.

“Whenever, therefore, the Viceroy or Governors write to you, let them describe the state of Christianity; the number and quality of the converts from heathenism; what hopes, what means there are of adding to their number; that for information upon these points you will trust only to their letters, passing over without notice all other reports, from whomsoever they come. Your Majesty should solemnly pledge your word, in the diplomas by which you institute and confer power on any one, that you will severely punish the Governor of any town or province in which few neophytes are added to our Holy Church, when it seems plain that, if it had been the wish of those in authority, many converts might have been secured. I very

earnestly desire that you should take an oath, invoking most solemnly the name of God, that in case any Governor thus neglects to spread the faith, he shall, on his return to Portugal, be punished by close imprisonment for many years, and all his goods and possessions shall be sold, and devoted to works of charity. In order that none may flatter themselves that this is but an idle threat, you must declare, as plainly as possible, that you will accept no excuses that may be offered ; but that the only way of escaping your wrath and obtaining your favour, is to make as many Christians as possible in the countries over which they rule.

“ I could give many instances to prove the necessity of this, but I will not weary your Majesty by what would only be a recital of my past and present anxieties, undergone without any hope of reward. I will only assert this much : if every Viceroy and Governor be fully persuaded that you have bound yourself by oath to do this, and that you will perform all that you have threatened, the whole island of Ceylon, many kings of the Malabar Coast, and the whole promontory of Comorin, will embrace the religion of Christ in a single year. But so long as the Viceroys and Governors are not urged by the fear of disgrace and fine to make many Christians, your Majesty must not hope that the preaching of the Gospel will meet with great success in India ; or that many will be brought to baptism, or make any progress in religion. The only reason why every man in India does not acknowledge the divinity of Christ, and profess His holy doctrine, is the fact that the Viceroy or Governor who neglects to make this his care receives no punishment from your Majesty.

“ But as I can scarcely hope that this will ever be done, I almost regret having written it, for fear lest these warnings may add to your condemnation at the last day. I do not know whether the excuse will then be admitted which you allege, namely, that you were not bound to give credence to my letters. But I can from the bottom of my heart assure your Majesty that I should never have written this about the Viceroy and Governors of this country, if I could in any way have reconciled it to my conscience to keep silence.”



### APPENDIX III.

THE following is the text of the circular issued by Archbishop de Menezes, convening the Synod of Diamper :—<sup>1</sup>

“ Dom Frey Aleixo de Menezes, by the mercy of God, and the Holy Roman See, Archbishop, Metropolitan of Goa, Primate of the Indies, and the Oriental Parts, etc. To the Reverend in Christ, Father George, Archdeacon of the Christians of St. Thomas in the Serra of the kingdom of Malabar, and to all other priests, curates, deacons, and subdeacons, and to all towns, villages, and hamlets, and to all Christian people of the said Bishopric, health in our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ We give you all, and every one of you in particular to understand, that the most Holy Father, Pope Clement VIII., our Lord Bishop of Rome, and Vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth, at this time presiding in the Church of God ; having sent two briefs directed to us, one of the 27th of January, in the year 1595, and the other of the 21st of the same month, in the year 1597 ; in which, by virtue of his pastoral office, and that universal power bequeathed to the supreme, holy, and Apostolical chair of St. Peter over all the Churches in the world, by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, he commanded us, upon the death of the Archbishop Mar Abraham, to take possession of this Church and Bishopric, so as not to suffer any Bishop or prelate, coming from Babylon, to enter

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by *Hough*, vol. ii., pp. 1-7, who is indebted to Geddes, English chaplain at Lisbon, 1678-1688, who translates Gouvea's original record.

therein, as has been hitherto the custom, all that come from thence being schismatics, heretics, and Nestorians, out of the obedience of the Holy Roman Church, and subject to the Patriarch of Babylon, the head of the said heresy ; and to appoint a governor or Apostolical vicar to rule the said diocese both in spirituals and temporals, until such time as the Holy Roman Church shall provide it of a proper pastor ; which being read by us, we were desirous to execute the Apostolical mandates with due reverence and obedience ; besides, that the same was incumbent on us of right (the said church having no chapter to take care of it during the vacancy of the see), as metropolitan and primate of this and all the other churches of the Indies, and the Oriental parts.

“ But perceiving that our mandate in that behalf had no effect, what we had ordered not having been obeyed in the said diocese, so that what our most holy father, the Bishop of Rome, had designed, was like to be frustrated ; after having laboured therein for the space of two years, schism and disobedience to the Apostolical see having been so rooted in that diocese for a great many years, that the inhabitants thereof, instead of yielding obedience to the Apostolical, and our mandates ; on the contrary, upon the intimation thereof, did daily harden themselves more and more, committing greater offences against the obedience due to the Holy Roman Church ; after having commended the matter to God, and ordered the same to be done through our whole diocese, and after mature advice, by what methods the Apostolical mandates might be best executed ; and being also moved by the piety of the people, and the mercy God had shown them in having preserved so many thousand souls in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, from the time that the holy Apostle St. Thomas had preached to them until this day, notwithstanding their having lived among so many heathens, and been scattered in divers places, their churches and all belonging to them, having been always subject to idolatrous kings and princes, and incompassed with idols and pagods, and that without holding any correspondence with any other Christians before the coming of the Portuguese into these parts ; we being likewise desirous that the labours of the holy Apostle St. Thomas, which still remained among them, should not be lost

for want of sound doctrine ; and that the Apostolical mandates might not be frustrated, did determine, and having provided for the government of our own Church, during our absence, did prepare to go in person to take possession of the said Bishopric, to see if by our presence we might be able to reduce them to the obedience of the Holy Roman Church, and purge out the heresies and false doctrines sown among them, and introduced by the schismatical prelates, and Nestorian heretics, that had governed them under the obedience of the Patriarch of Babylon ; as also to call in and purge the books containing those heresies ; and according to our pastoral duty, so far as God should enable us, to preach to them in person the Catholic truth.

“ Accordingly, going into the said Bishopric, we set about visiting the churches thereof ; but at that time Satan, the great enemy of the good of souls, having stirred up great commotions, and much opposition against this our just intent, great numbers departing from us, and forming a schism against the Holy Roman Church ; after having passed through many troubles and dangers, out of all which, God of his great mercy, not remembering our sins and evil deeds, was pleased to deliver us, and to grant us an entire peace, for the merits of the glorious Apostle St. Thomas, the Patron of this Christianity, but chiefly of his own great clemency and mercy, which make, that he doth not delight in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should return and live ; and by coming all to the light of the truth, may join with us in the confession of the Catholic faith, approving our doctrine and intention, and submitting themselves to the obedience of the Holy Roman Church ; which being by us observed, after having returned thanks to God, we thought fit, in order to the compassing and securing of all those good effects, to assemble a diocesan synod in some commodious place near the middle of the said diocese, there to treat of all such matters as are convenient for the honour of God, the exaltation of the holy catholic faith and divine worship, the good of the church, the extirpation of vice, the reformation of the Christians of the said diocese, and the profit and peace of their souls ; to which end, having pitched upon the town and church of Diamper, we do hereby let all the inhabitants and Christians of the said Bishopric, as well ecclesiastics as laicks, of what state or con-

dition soever, to understand, that we do call and assemble a diocesan synod in the said town of Diamper, on the 20th of June, of this present year, 1599, being the third Sunday after Whitsuntide ; and do therefore, by virtue of holy obedience, and upon pain of excommunication *latae sententiae*, command the reverend, the Archdeacon of this diocese, and all the other priests of the same, that shall not be hindered by age, or some other just impediment, to be present in the said town of Diamper, there with us to celebrate a diocesan synod conformable to the holy canons ; and whereas by immemorial custom, and a right introduced into this diocese from its beginning, and consented to by all the infidel kings of Malabar, the whole governments, as it were, and the cognizance of all matters wherein Christians are any ways concerned, has belonged to the Church, and the prelate thereof ; and it having likewise been an ancient custom in the same, to give an account to the people of whatsoever has been ordained in the Church, in order to its being the better observed by all : we do therefore, under the same precept and censure, command all Christians in all towns and villages of this Bishopric ; and where there are no villages, all that use to assemble together at any church as belonging to it, immediately upon this our pleasure being intimated to them, to chuse four of the most honourable, conscientious, and experienced persons among them, to come in their name at the said time, to the said synod, with sufficient powers to approve, sign, confirm, and consult in their name, so as to oblige themselves thereby to comply with whatsoever shall be determined in the synod. And that these commissioners may demand or propose whatsoever they shall judge to be of importance to the synod, and for the spiritual or temporal good of their people ; we do grant free liberty to all in this diocese, as well ecclesiastics as laicks, that have any complaints, grievances, or controversies about any such matters as are decidable by the prelate, or other Christians, to represent the same to the synod ; where they shall be heard with patience, and have justice done them according to the sacred canons, customs, and lawful usages of the country.

“ And whereas we are informed that there are several things in this Bishopric which are the causes of great contentions, we do therefore not only give leave, but do also admonish and com-

mand all that are concerned in any such matters, that, forbearing all other ways that are prejudicial to Christianity, they do now make use of this just and holy way of putting an end to all their debates ; and since to bring all these things to a good issue the favour and assistance of God is necessary, from whom all good things do proceed, and without whom we can do nothing ; wherefore, to engage the divine clemency by prayer to be favourable to us, following the laudable custom of the holy fathers, and ancient councils, we do admonish, and in the name of God earnestly request, all the faithful Christians of this Bishopric, from this time forward until the end of the synod, to exercise themselves with a pure and clean heart, in fasting, alms, prayers, and other works of piety, instantly beseeching God to enlighten the understandings of all that shall meet together, and so inflame our wills with Divine love, that we may determine nothing but what is right, and may observe and comply with whatsoever shall be decreed ; taking for our intercessor, our lady the most holy Virgin Mary, of whose praise and honour we are to treat particularly ; as also the glorious Apostle St. Thomas, the master, patron, and protector of this Church ; and all the other saints in heaven, that so this synod may begin, and proceed in peace and universal concord, and may end to the praise, honour, and glory of God our Lord for ever. And that this our publication of a diocesan synod may come to the knowledge of all that are concerned, we will and command it to be read, in all the churches of this Bishopric, to the people on Sunday next after the intimation thereof to the curates ; and after that, to be fixed to the gates of the church.

“ Dated from Chanotta, 14th of May, under our seal, and the great seal of our chancery, and written by Andre Cerqueira, secretary to the most illustrious Archbishop and Primate in the year 1599.

“ FREY ALEIXO ARCEBISPO, PRIMAS.”

## APPENDIX IV.

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